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Diamondhead Jubilee

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The Country Club, 1970 - 1995

"Silver Anniversary Commemorative History"

by

Dan Ellis

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Aloha, to Paradise!

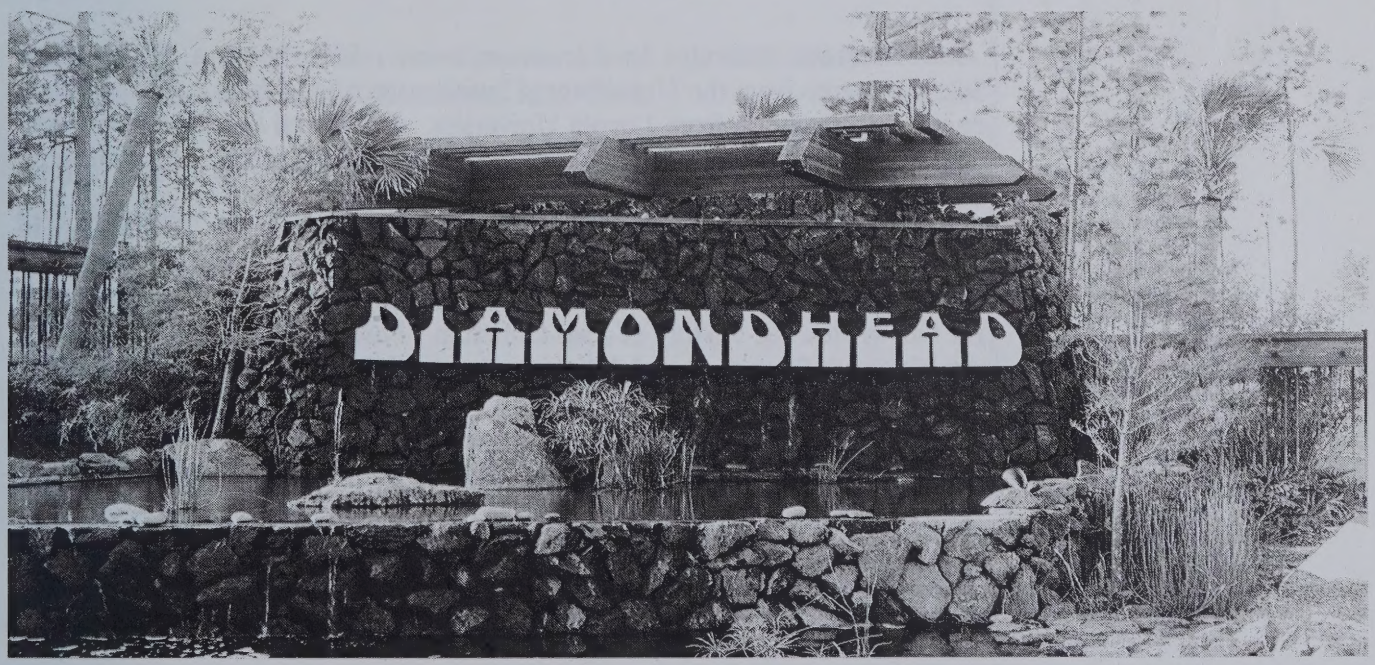
Cherubims lifting their wings on high,
East of the Garden of Eden.
Continuing in flight through the rest of the night,
Sounding their wings with reason.

Alighting among the tall Piney hills,
Midst wondrous, Aquatic expanse;
Echoing the call of Dawn's early shrills,
Warmed softly by new romance.

Bearing peace and charm to a new abode,
In spiritual energy.
Blending joyful hearts in sportive mode;
Hearkening in our reverie.

From whence you have come, you are now here lead
Welcome to you, we entice.
Jubilation is here in Diamondhead;
Aloha, to Paradise!

Dan Ellis



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INTRODUCTION

The following pages present a brief illustrative history of **Diamondhead** and its neighboring areas, from formative years and on through early development in becoming one of the most beautiful residential resorts in the country.

As you read this book, it is felt that the narration, photographs and drawings will enable you to realize the unique blend of events and endeavors which, through the years, have meant population growth, economic expansion, healthful prosperity, and a crime-free, litter-free community as envisioned by the original developers and the first pioneers who made "Diamondhead Paradise" come alive.

The perspective is in keeping with the dynamics of a resort community which is activity oriented and abundant with recreational amenities. Diamondhead is ensconced in a Gulf Coast environment with a climate beneficial to water sports, golfing, and relaxation. Moreover, the community is enriched by a wooded ambience amid slowly rolling hills which are penetrated by water ways, lakes and ponds.

This book represents a salute to **Diamondhead**, and especially to you and all the people who have made this development such an outstanding place in which to live, work, and play.

The Hawaiians use the term *Aloha* in several different context references, Aloha means "Hello" as in the poem "Aloha to Paradise". Then, too, **Aloha** means "Goodbye" as in the enclosed poem "Aloha Country Club". ---And, *Aloha* also means "Love"; which is so abounding in this Paradise community -- rightly called **Diamondhead**.

So, I say, Aloha, with *Aloha*, and **Aloha** to all of you.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR -- *DAN ELLIS*

Former Educator and business owner, Ellis holds a Bachelor of Science degree from the University of Southeastern Louisiana, and a Master's degree in Education from Loyola University. Additional Graduate work was achieved in Sociology and Psychology from Tulane University and Louisiana State University.

He has been noted for his many articles on Computer Technology in New Orleans newspapers and in Computer journals. Upon taking permanent residence on the Gulf Coast he writes articles on folklore and historic events. He has written the History of Pass Christian, "*Pass in Revue*", a commemorative history of Diamondhead, "*Diamondhead Jubilee*", and an historic Vignette on the Gulf Coast

Ellis is active with the Coast Chamber of Commerce as a member of the Board of Directors. He was signaled out by "*Coast Business*" for Who's Who in 1995.

His style of writing is light and easy while his research is pursued with in-depth scrutiny for cautious authenticity in pursuit of Historical Correctness.

In Dedication:

To all of the wonderful people who aided in the writing, gathering of incidents, pictures, anecdotes and their delightful encouragement in support of this historical presentation.

In Acknowledgement:

To the following persons and institutions for their part in making this history of Diamondhead possible.

The Historical POA Diamondhead Collection
The Hancock Chamber of Commerce
The Hancock Historical Society
The Hancock County Public Library
The Kiln Public Library
The Biloxi Public Library
The Pass Christian Public Library

And to Ms Dot Hector for her rendering of "*The Country Club*"

And, support from my recently departed mother, and my brothers, and my sisters.

And, an ongoing affection for the essence of my daughters; Brenda, Suzanne, Karyn, Cynthia, Madelyn, and Gina.

And, to all of the wonderful Diamondhead residents, in particular the Patrons listed on the appending page.

The Cover

"Dot Hector's Country Club"

Dot Hector was born in Lexington, Mississippi on August 16, 1904. Pursuing a young girl's heart, Dot Hector attended the Cincinnati Art Academy where she learned to master her skills. However, her love for painting was interrupted with marriage and raising two sons.

It wasn't until her 54th birthday that she became an ardent artist. "Since then, I have been painting up a storm," she joyfully exclaims. "I use to enjoy doing my Delta Scenes, but now, Antebellum cottages and estate Homes are my specialty." Her refreshing style was added to by continuing training in Mexico, Japan, and State-side Universities.

In past years, and even today, many of the mansions and cottages along Scenic Drive and Beach Avenue have been etched by Dot's hand. She has also painted homes in Diamondhead as well as many communities throughout Mississippi.

Ms. Hector has established permanent residency on West Beach, Pass Christian with her son, Holcomb Hector and his wife. Limited Edition copies of "*The Country Club*" can be purchased from the *ALOHA GALLERY.*

HONORED PATRONS

"Helping hands who have honored the publication of this Book"

Wayne M. Alphonso
Chalres E. Anderson
Anne Anthony
James B. Beagle, Sr.
Jean L. Beagle
Andy Borja
Dimple Borja
Coast Delta Realty, Inc.
Dottie Council
Diamondhead Super Market
Lorraine S. Heier
Schoen Heier
Hinky Dinky
Vernon Howell
Bernie Iverson
Bernice B. Johnston
Jerry W. Kelly
Marilyn Kelly
Jeanne C. McWilliams
Merchants Bank & Trust Co.
Michael D. Milliken
Paul Montjoy
Karen Parsel
Syble R. Paul
Katherine B. Reed
Mary G. Sinders
Elaine Syverson
Russ Syverson
Dick Weber
Marge Weber
John A. Williamson
Margaret Williamson

Diamondhead Jubilee
"Silver Anniversary"
A Commemorative History

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Paradise Proclaimed

Aloha! Aloha to Gulf Coast Country! This is a most splendid and wondrous playground. For almost three centuries this area has continued to maintain a reserved excellence of pastoral qualities and uniqueness. The beautiful rolling hills and marsh lands merge with fresh water bayous and rivers which empty into the Bay to then flow southward into the salt waters of the Mississippi Sound.

Twenty-five years ago the ambitious local development of Diamondhead sprang from the drawing board of its promoters, etching itself amongst the piney woods north of the Bay of St. Louis. 6,400 acres were sculptured with a network of streets and cul de sacs flowing out of the bayous and rivers of the pine hills of Gulf Coast Mississippi. During the past twenty-five years, Diamondhead has flourished. Today, some 5,000 people make this thriving resort their permanent address. About 2500 lots have been improved by the construction of permanent residential homes. Diamondhead is a complete, private community established for people of all ages. With its relaxed atmosphere and many recreational amenities, professional and business inhabitants find it a great place to retreat to after the pressures of a work day. Young families find Diamondhead a wonderful environment in which to raise their children because of the safety, security, cleanliness, recreational and group activities available for both children and parents alike.

The Mississippi Gulf Coast is steeped in history which unfolds for the past 300 years. The Coast is the original melting pot for Spanish, French, English and many other nationals with indigenous Choctaw Indians.

Needless to say, the community excels in its offering to Senior Citizens as an exemplary place for retirement because of its many supportive organizations, fishing and golfing recreation, crime free environment, proximity to many other cities, and its health, medical and nursing facilities. Diamondhead's gently rolling terrain is an exceptional and pleasant diversion from the predominantly flat coastal topography. Diamondhead's ten square miles are surrounded by water on three sides adding to its beauty and recreational opportunities. Orleanians continue to return to make the Coast their summer playhouse. In most recent decades, Mid-westerners, New Englanders and folks from most other states have made the discovery. In spite of this, the Gulf Coast remains a country within itself.

The Coastal sister cities are like pearls held together by a ribbon of sand beachs extending West and East from New Orleans to Mobile.

The Mississippi Gulf Coast is steeped in history which unfolds for the past 300 years with traces of the early Spanish, French, and English. The Coast is the original "melting-pot" of many nationalities who learned to meld and mix. As the native Indians mingled in with the early settlers, so were the ensuing generations by African Americans, Polish, Irish, Greek, Italian and Dalmatian workers who were brought in to work the seafood canneries. For the past 150 years, the Coastal cities have become resorts beckoning tourists from all over the States to come and refresh. Many visitors come back again and again and again.

The sister cities of the Gulf Coast are like pearls held together by a ribbon of sand beaches extending from the West to the East. New Orleans or Mobile can be reached within a trifle more than an hour. Along the coasts, east and west of the Bay of St. Louis, each City or community abuts the next. Very little can be realized by a Newcomer unless they visit every community in savoring the diverse and distinct characteristics of each.

Diamondhead is a complete, private community established for people of all ages, a crime free environment replete with fishing and golfing recreation, serviced by medical and nursing facilities, and within minutes to neighboring Coastal cities.

The Gulf Coast Country is uncluttered. To the West of the Bay of St. Louis, coursing the Gulf shore, is Beach Boulevard paralleling 8 miles of sand beaches which trim the banks of Point Caddy, Lakeshore, Clermont Harbor, Waveland and the City of Bay St. Louis. East of the Bay of St. Louis spans another 26 miles along the Mississippi Sound which threads through Pass Christian, Long Beach, Gulfport, and Biloxi. Each community supports its own Harbor and small craft marina with awaiting adventures in water sports. Expanding the Coast line is Highway 90 which rightfully is called the Hospitality Highway, where the traveler can relish the splendor and magnificence of the many Antebellum homes dotting the shorefront. Not unexpectantly, resplendent neon signs will direct the pilgrim to 13 Gaming Casinos encased between Hancock and Harrison Counties, while unrevealed and hidden within the tall pines are 21 Golf courses along its traverse.

North of the Bay of St. Louis cuddled in the Northwestern reaches is Diamondhead and nestled in its Northeastern hide-away is DeLisle. The Dupont complex cradles the Northcentral shores basking in the former Pine Hills settlement. Postured approximately five miles north of the Mississippi Sound is Interstate 10 cutting its path from westerly and easterly directions above the Bay of St. Louis. As each community holds hands with the next, the journey is replete with Sun, Sea and Sand spawning a radiance all along the Gulf Coast Country.

Just listening to the mocking birds as they sing their songs on a quiet afternoon on any Bayou or water way, the alert person can hear them call out. Welcome to Gulf Coast Country! Welcome to this near-tropic abode of sun, sea and white sand. Welcome to this country abounding in beautiful tall pines, moss-layered water oaks and fragrant magnolias. Welcome to the land of hospitality!

"And everywhere so many stories still untold, so many places yet unvisited. In the sandy soil grow rain lilies and spider lilies and sprays of palmettos; and the forest and fields are thick with honeysuckle, wisteria and wild rose vines. In the aromatic air the catalpa and the tupelo and the banana and the crepe-myrtle flourish beside the magnolia and the water oak; so profusely that it seems that the tropic wilderness must some day again envelop this prodigal land." [1]

Diamondhead is ideally positioned on high ground without threats of flooding. It is perforated with bayous, rivers, and small lakes with the Bay of St. Louis at its feet.

For these and many more reasons, folks from all over the United States have been selecting Gulf Coast Country as their choice of residence and future retirement. The inducements are many. Diamondhead is located in an amphitheater-like domain displaying its extraordinary fulfillment to all of the neighboring areas surrounding the

[1] *"Carter, p 159"*

Bay of St. Louis. Diamondhead is ideally positioned at a central point of the Crescent surrounding the Bay thereby allowing it quick access to the beaches in either Hancock or Harrison counties. Diamondhead, on high ground without threats of flooding, is perforated with bayous, rivers, small lakes, and the Bay of St. Louis at its feet.

"Many streams and bays assist in creating this productive stretch of oceanic wealth. The Bay of St. Louis is a constant supply of fresh water mixing with the salt water of the Gulf makes possible this tremendous assembly of marine life. The Gulf Coast region, with its indentations along the shoreline, its islands, and its marshes, is one of the greatest of pelagic nursery grounds on earth, fish of many kinds and in infinite numbers, [including] crabs, oysters, and shrimp [which] are hatched each year." [2]

Aloha to Gulf Coast Country!
Aloha to Diamondhead!
Aloha to Paradise!
Aloha!

Aloha Paradise! -- Aloha Diamondhead! -- The Community Center, originally used as the Sales Lodge, was completed in 1971.

THE INDIAN HERITAGE

Many historians report that the Native Indians of the Gulf Coast had originated from the lands across the southern waters. Presumably, this would be the Yucatan Peninsula of Mexico, the Land of the Mayan Indians.

In accord with the spiritual doctrine of the Maya, the Indians believed that the world came to an end every 52 years which harmonized with their 52 year calendar cycle. To celebrate this cycle closing and the ensuing rebirth, they put out all fires, canceled all debts, and made proper retribution in preparation for the end. They also would start a new emergence of activity by building on top of existing pyramids. This was accomplished by enveloping another layer of blocks covering the remaining structure of the older buildings, much like a shell encasing the old.

The Yucatan Peninsula, known as Mayaland, is located directly south of the Bay of St. Louis.

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[2] *"Carter, p 159"*

The ensuing migration accounts concur with Indian legends from the Yucatan Peninsula and from the lower Mississippi valley. One young Mayan Chieftain had a dream. He was told to take leave of the land and go North over the waters to a new world. He was also told to take the sacred pole and to stand it on its end each day. The direction in which the pole would lean, would be the course of travel for that day. His journey would end when the sacred spear would stand erect without leaning in any direction.

In obedience to the dream, he gathered his tribal group to follow him. They traveled to the nearby coastal region of Tulum south of present day CanCun. Tulum in the ancient Toltec language means *Walled City*. This Indian fortification was built around 1200 A.D. The Toltecs aided the young chieftain in giving his tribe their fishing boats to make their journey. On departing, the Toltec High Priest gave the young chieftain a ceremonial spear as his gesture of good luck. The spear was placed in a holding sheaf and, as in the dream, the spear immediately directed them northward. Day after day the spear continued to lead them northerly until they landed on the coast of their new home. Day continued after new day for 43 days since they had left the Yucatan, until finally the spear remained erect somewhere along the Gulf Coast.

Tulum is located on the eastern shore of the Yucatan Peninsula a half hour South of CanCun. The ancient walled city of pyramids is spread on a high bluff facing one of the largest coral reefs in the world.

Over hundreds of years, their culture became greatly modified by the new terrain which consisted of marshlands and low rolling hills. The pyramid structure was seriously altered by becoming mounds raised where the earth was dry. Even today there are signs of mounds from Indians of old that can be found in certain sections of Bay St Louis, DeLisle, and Pearlington. There were also mounds found at the juncture of Indian Bayou flowing into Bayou Portage and at Pass Christian.

The early Spanish and French explorers encountered various tribes along the Gulf coast such as the Biloxi, Pascagoula, Sechluel, and the Alnico. Near the mouth of the Mississippi River they encountered the Tangipahoa, Mongoulachas, and the Bayagoulas; and further upriver they smoked the peace pipe and celebrated the dance of the Calumet with the Nipissas and the Quinipissas. The Indians called the great Mississippi river the *Malbanchya*. The early Spanish called it the *Rio de Espiritu Santo*. The early French called it the *Missicipy* or *Myssysypy*. [3]

"During the spring of 1700, Iberville reported contacts only with small groups [of indians] a male hunting party in one instance, and nuclear or small extended families, one of whom was traveling with

[3] *"Iberville, p. 7."*

stored maize and beans." [4] Indian villages lay deep in the interior far above the limits of tidewater. Native villages were located well inland and coastal sites were typically dispersed with small, seasonal encampments.

Iberville found Indian villages were located well inland above the tidewater limits. Coastal sites were small, seasonal encampments.

Choctaws, the descendants of Chief Chakta and his followers were by far the strongest Indian tribe in Mississippi. They lived in the Central and Southwest regions and covered the Southern half of Mississippi. Because the tribe was too large to be ruled by one man, the Choctaws divided their people into three groups each ruled by a chief known as a *Mingo*. Chief Tacala Yarbo ruled the Hancock tribal group from the Devil Swamp's lower central part of the country.

"The Choctaw dispersed in small, presumably family-based, groups in the Spring after the crops were planted. They subsisted on fruit and aquatic foods until the early summer when they returned to the home community for the annual Green Corn Ceremony. Following this, they dispersed again until harvest time. After the crops were harvested in the Fall, the men were away on the Fall hunt and the remaining villagers gathered nuts and other resources for Winter and early Spring consumption." [5]

The Choctaws were adept at hunting and fishing. They skinned the animals in Rotten Bayou which derived its name from the Indians, who called it Baneeshewah. They called it this because of the rotting carcasses they left in the flowing waters after they removed the skins for clothes and the meat for food.

"The Choctaws also became adept at hunting and fishing. Along the Baneeshewah Bayou or Rotten Bayou as it is called today, the Indians found deer in great abundance. They tanned hides by stretching the skins from forked poles stationed in the water. The Indians also used these forked posts as bridges across Streams and Bayous." [6] "The remains and the carcasses were thrown in the Bayou which over time, collected along the banks and got entangled in sunken logs and branches near Devils Elbow. The stench was incredible and overwhelming, as a result, the name *Banshawah* or *Baneeshewah*, which means *decayed stream* [or, Rotten Bayou]." [7]

The Indians remained shy of the white man following their encounter with the Spaniard, DeSoto. During his mid-1500s trek along the Coast from Florida to the Mississippi River he killed all Indians he came in contact with. However the French finally made friends with the Indians and by 1730, the Choctaws and the French accepted each other as equals. Intermarriages even produced some Choctaw leadership as characterized by the famous Chief Greenwood LeFlore.

Through the years, Yellow Fever epidemics, warfare and colonial encroachment, greatly affected the Indian population. When

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[4] *"Penicaut, p. 16"*
[5] *"Lewis, p. 117"*
[6] *"Hancock Hawk, p. 18"*
[7] *"Howard, p. 9"*

the Indian Removal Act of 1830 was enacted, the tribes east of the Mississippi River were forced to exchange their home lands for new lands in the West. The Choctaws and Chickasaws of Mississippi were included, as well as Creeks from Florida. This enforced migration was later called the *Trail of Tears.*

Many of the mix blooded Indians dropped their Native names in favor of their European family name and remained in the wooded areas. Not unusually, these names were Favre, Dedeaux, Cuevas, Ladner, Dubuisson, etc. Farve or Favre is a common name for many of today's Indians who live in Hancock County.

Indians are now, few in number along the Gulf Coast. Much of the Indian Heritage has been forgotten. However, we might justly remind ourselves that many of the names of towns, counties, rivers and bayous, and even the State name of Mississippi proclaims the omnificense of their progeny. For the amateur archaeologist or Indian lore seeker there are still traces of the native Indian even around Diamondhead. Archaeological components in Mississippi are unfortunately based entirely on the results of limited excavations thereby providing limited data. However, some Indian shell piles called middens still have potential historical significance. The description below pertains to a site around the Diamondhead airport grounds.

"A small, recent test excavation at the Diamondhead site, a cluster of *Rangia* shell middens near the mouth of Jourdan River in St. Louis Bay [was] interpreted as a processing location for clam meat drying or smoking. The midden fill was comprised mostly of clam shells, wood charcoal, ashes, and a poorly consolidated sandy matrix." [8] "Elsewhere along the coast, the presence of a large shell midden was found on the northern shore of St. Louis Bay at Pine Hills." [9] This area was so profound with shell mounds that it became known as *Shelly.*

Webster's definition of a *Midden* is a waste pile. Many Indian mounds have been found along the coast which were stacks of amassed clam and oyster shells which were left behind after the Indians ate the food contents. Several other Indian mounds are burial grounds.

Not everyone, however, has an Indian mound in their back yard. Positioned in the Southeast corner of Diamondhead is a prehistoric archaeological site originally recorded in 1933 and was entitled the *Bayou Park Mound.* The Indian burial mound is actually shared by two property owners, the Schaefers and the Necaise's. Michael Schaefer purchased his lot in 1978 and immediately built his home for his wife and four children. On the first day of construction, the builder was in the process of clearing the lot. As Schaefer watched the tractor beginning to cut away a large mound, he requested the contractor to stop work. Previously unnoticed, due to trees and underbrush,

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[8] *"Lewis, p. 117"*

[9] *"Lewis, p. 119"*

Schaefer intuitively told the work crew to let the mound remain. Having a long history of travels to many areas, and knowledgeable about the Indian mounds around Redwing, Minnesota, he resolved to let the mound stay undisturbed in the corner of his property.

Several years later in 1982, the mound was verified by Dr. R. Barry Lewis, then an official with the Mississippi Department of Archives and History. Lewis had approached the Schaefer's to ask permission for several archaeological students and himself to survey the mound. Another circumstance occurred in 1993, the owners of the adjacent property were about to bulldoze the mound intending to use it as fill on their lot prior to building. Fortunately, Schaefer was again able to save the historic site by warning the owner of the mound's significance. Devastation of the mound was again halted and the new owner requested further verification from the Mississippi Department of Archives and History. This resulted in an archaeological review team site examination in 1994. The mound was measured at 5 feet height with a diameter of about 60 feet and a broad two foot deep depression which was created over the years by vandals. It was proved to be an Indian Burial Mound dating from 100 B.C. to A.D. 500 during the *Middle Woodland Period* of prehistory. Thus, the native Indians that created this mound had done so, long before DeSoto ever made his *Pasada* or bloody trek from Florida to the Mississippi River in the 1500s.

Mike Schaefer points to the top of the Indian Burial Mound which has been certified by the Mississippi Department of Archives and History as having originated during the Middle Woodland Period of prehistory (100 B.C. to A.D. 500).

The owners were congratulated for their proper caution in preserving the site's sensitive nature and archaeological significance. Also, they were made aware that the burial mound is protected from disturbance by the State Antiquities Act of Mississippi. Mr. Schaefer has been duly commended for his earnest zeal in preserving the antiquity, the culture, and the burial ground of the Choctaw Indians. [10]

Since the new owners of the adjoining property were no longer inclined to build their habitat on the lot, they sold it to their attorney. Mr. and Mrs. Necaise visited the property before confirming the purchase. Mrs Necaise stated that she fell in love with the property at first sight as a result of watching two young deer emerge from the woods to drink from a fresh water ravine near the property. She, too, recognized the treasure of past centuries aligning that portion of land which she and her husband now own. [11]

A staff Archaeologist with the Mississippi Department of Archives is supporting Schaefer's interest in having the mound nominated to the National Register of Historic Places.

Michael Schaefer maintains an on-going communication with the State Archaeologists who expect to make another inspection review in the near future. Both of the owning families plan to keep the property

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[10] *"Interview with Mike Schaefer, May 27, 1995"*

[11] *"Interview with Mrs. David Necaise, March 14, 1995"*

protected. Many of their neighbors are still not cognizant of the presence of the Choctaw Nation burial ground.

The French Heritage

Robert Cavalier De La Salle, French Explorer and Founder of the Missisippi River and named the Louisiana Territory for France.

In the 1500s the Spanish and the Portuguese mapped the shores of the Gulf of Mexico, it is no mishap that the Gulf continued with its original naming by the Spanish which was and still is called the Gulf of Mexico. Had it been otherwise, the French explorers would have probably called it the Gulf of Louisiana, because the French had a penchant for immediately christening everything they discovered. The Spaniard DeSoto is credited as being the first European to encounter the flowing Mississippi River having traversed the present State of Mississippi in 1542. The early French influence in the New World was in Canada having founded Quebec in 1608. Father Marquette and Joliet initiated explorations of the Mississippi valley followed by De La Salle's expeditions. Robert Cavalier de La Salle, a native of Rouen, France, bought provisions to explore the Mississippi valley. His first voyage from Montreal in 1669 was unsuccessful and was followed up in 1680. Finally arriving at the mouth of the river on April 9, 1682, La Salle erected a cross blazoned with the French Coat of Arms and proclaimed formal possession of the Mississippi River and all it tributaries, and of all the lands, in the name of Louis XIV, King of France. He named the River St. Louis and the land Louisiana. His last voyage was an attempt to find the Mississippi's mouth by way of the Gulf of Mexico. This was unsuccessful and he was killed in the process. It was left to others to build and pay tribute to his memory as planner and designer.

The baton was turned over to Pierre Le Moyne, Sieur d'Iberville, of French Canada. He had been entrusted by King Louis XIV to find the southern passage to the Mississippi River and to lay claim to these lands for France. The King instructed Iberville, "go to the Gulf of Mexico, locate the mouth . . . select a good site that can be defended with a few men, and block entry to the river by other nations." [12]

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[12] *"Iberville, p. 4"*

Aware of English commitments to establish a trading post upon the banks of the mouth of the Mississippi, Iberville made the first move. He commissioned and outfitted the *Badine*, the *Marin* and several slower vessels called *Travasiers* or transports. With careful discretion and determination, he selected his men. With a prime staff including his brother, Bienville, he picked Spanish-speaking Frenchmen, Spanish deserters from Mexico, and other French Canadian filibusters. He ordered trade items for the Indians and stored many guns and ammunition. He was prepared to fight the English if for any reason he didn't arrive at the Gulf first.

Iberville, after outfitting the *Badine*, the *Marin* and several Travasiers; left Brest, France, in October 1698; and arrived at Pensacola and later, Mobile Bay in January of 1699.

They left from Brest, France in October of 1698 and arrived at the Spanish controlled island of Santo Domingo in January of 1699. Spending just enough time to take on new provisions and hiring on fresh local hands they started scouring the coast lines westward probing water inlets in search of the mouth of the Mississippi. He used faulty charts and journals which had been sketched and described by former explorations of La Salle and Marquette. New journals and charts were redesigned during the expedition. They encountered the Spanish at Pensacola and left them unchallenged to continue their westward journey. They arrived at the Bay of Mobile and probed for its inlet areas. During all explorations along the way Iberville would raise crosses and cut the bark of trees to establish their presence. Further West they encountered Horn Island which was so named because a soldier had lost his powder horn during a landing. Next, on February 10, 1699, they encountered Ship Island and Cat Island.

Because of the large numbers of racoons, the French called the island *Isle-aux-Chats* or Cat Island. Some historical reviews suggest that the French, on seeing so many racoons, assumed them to be a progeny of cats. However, authoritative researchers signal that the Canadian French were quite astute in their knowledge of furred animals, including raccoons, which they called *chats sauvages* or *chats-aux-hitres*. Often, the raccoons would fish the shores seeking to eat the oysters by cracking open their shells. They would insert their claws to pry for food. By chance, one would get their claws caught between the locked shells and would be compelled to await the change of tide. This would often result in their drowning.

"On Monday, March 2, 1699, as a storm was pounding the schooner. The French, on attempting to seek haven, coincidentally discovered the mouth of the Mississippi River. The following day they celebrated Mardi Gras with a catholic mass and raised a cross as a symbol of their manifestation. Here, they planted one of a series of the *Fleur-des-Lys*. Upon returning to the Gulf, Iberville realized that they needed to establish a fort in order to protect their claim to the

Mississippi River. This resulted in seeking out a safe harbor with adequate deep waters to anchor their ships. In sounding for a channel, they favored Biloxi over Lake Pontchartrain." [13]

During their initial venture along the Coast, the French discovered a small tribe of Choctaws living in the Bay St. Louis area. Their village was called *Chicapoula* [or bad grass]. As one of the ship's historians wrote: "On the twelfth of April, 1699, d'Iberville set out to visit a bay about nine leagues from Ship Island, to which he gave the name of St. Louis. But finding the water very shallow there, he concluded to fix his settlement at Biloxi." [14] Thus it was that the shallow waters of the Bay of St. Louis kept it from becoming the first French capital of the Mississippi Valley.

Bienville returned to the bay aboard the *Marin*, upon which the journalist Andre Joseph Penicaut wrote, "We shortly afterwards found a beautiful bay, about one league in width by four in circumference, which was named the Bay of St. Louis . . . we hunted there three days and killed fifty deer." On returning to the Bay of St. Louis after a trip up the Mississippi River, Penicaut continued, "We hunted several days around this bay and filled our boats with venison, buffalo and other game." [15]

"Apparently, Bienville and his brother felt the Indians at the Bay were friendly, because a few families were placed there along with a sergeant and fifteen soldiers. Over twenty years later, the neglected little colony was joined by thirty people holding royal concessions sent over by King Louis XIV." [16]

The French were famous for planting their *Fleur-des-Lys* or *Golden Fleur de Lis* on a white field, upon making any land or major water exploration.

One of Bienville's entourage, the Compte DeLisle, explored around the eastern coastline of the Bay of St. Louis and penetrated several inlets which he encountered, such as the DeLisle Bayou and the *Riviere des Loups* which is now called Wolf River and the town, DeLisle, was later named for him.

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[13] *"King, pp 11 - 43"*

[14] *"The Coast of Mississippi, Hancock Bank, p. 12"*

[15] *"Penicaut, p 22"*

[16] *"The Coast of Mississippi, Hancock Bank, p. 12"*

The Early Colonists

Iberville chose Biloxi as the first Capital of Louisiana in 1699, followed by Mobile, and then New Orleans. Mobile was founded on January 1702 which, for a brief period, became the center for Indian trade and French diplomacy. In 1704 the *Pelican* arrived with the first of New World brides. "There were twenty-three marriageable girls who were reared in piety and who were drawn from sources above suspicion and who know how to work." [17] These were the forerunners of the Casquette girls. They were the predecessors, too, of a group of prostitutes from a house of correction in Paris who were willing to come to Louisiana in exchange for freedom. Those woodsmen desiring a caucasian wife were not at all concerned with the prior behavior of such *ladies.*

Iberville chose Biloxi as the first Capital of the French Mississippi Valley claims, then moved the Capital to Mobile, and finally to New Orleans in 1721.

From the inception of exploration, the French governing officials had high hopes in gaining great wealth from the Mississippi region. However, as time passed, all of Europe fell into dire economic hardship due to the influx of wars and famine. The early French settled along the coast primarily to display their flag and to protect their political dominion from English and Spanish take over. The inhabitants of these initial European settlements perceived the sea as a supply route rather than as a source of food. Therefore the early colonists settled mostly in sea-oriented, unkempt villages and depended on trade and their home governments for their survival. However, the early settlers soon found themselves left to fend for themselves. There was no food or supplies or even trinkets to keep the Indians happy. As time passed and as the French government did not bring adequate supplies, the colonists learned to exploit the local oyster beds and many other estuarine resources.

The Bay of St. Louis was named for King Louis XIV and the mainland of Pass Christian derived its name following the settlement of Cat Island with the settling by Nicholas Christian L'Adnier and his bride, Marianne. The two channels or passes were each named for Christian and Marianne. One account for the naming of the City of Pass Christian was simply by taking Christian's name in which the pronunciation changed to Chris-ti-**anne**, emphasis on **anne**.

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[17] *"Penicaut, p. 77"*

"Large grants of land on the Mississippi, and along this coast, were made by the French government, on the condition of colonization. The Bay of St Louis was given to Madame de Mezieres (who dispatched a ship, which arrived in January 1721 with 300 colonists. From these and from the Acadians expelled by the English from Nova Scotia following the Treaty of Paris in 1763, and from a few Greek and Minorcan families imported into Florida by the English in 1767, most of the Creole population of this Coast is descended." [18]

Even though Madame de Mezieres had been given most of present-day Hancock County, she did not complete her obligations to keep the grant according to its mandates. Therefore, in 1712 the first official land grant was issued to and settled by Jean Baptiste Saucier who settled at Wolf Town, which, by name change, became DeLisle in 1884. His grant included most of present day Hancock County and Western Harrison County.

The first Negroes were brought in by a ship from the Coast of Africa; and some two hundred Germans arrived. The first coinage was introduced to the Coast in the form of copper coins dated 1721. Specimens have been found in the vicinity of the Bay. [19]

During the early 1700s, the French spread out along the Coast and invaded the Bayous and Rivers of the Bay of St. Louis. "The French Canadians were not like the other colonists. From the first days of the settlement, they took the comely Choctaw women as concubines and the young girls of the Natchez and Chickasaw as slaves. They adamantly insisted that they had to have women to do their washing and their cooking, in order to make sagamite; and to maintain their cabins. No military order and no religious edict could keep them from the Indian girls. As time passed, small dusky half-breed children were found playing about their cabins. They would grow up to be approved by the blood-tolerant Canadians. As years went by, this fact became concealed as newcomers criticized the practice." [20]

Some of the early French pioneering settlers left the Coastal settlements in search of hunting and trapping grounds, found lands north of the Bay of St. Louis to their liking.

Following the Treaty of Paris, Simon Favre settled north of the Bay in 1766 where he selected a site on the Pearl River and named it Napoleon after Napoleon Bonaparte, the Emperor of France. Simon Favre was the progenitor of a large family of descendants.

Another early immigrant was Jean Cadet de La Fontaine who made his way down the Mississippi River from Canada and settled a large section of land in Ansley which is southwest of present-day Lakeshore. Bayou Caddy [Cadet] carries his name to this day.

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[18] *"Claiborne, p. 2"*
[19] *"Claiborne, p. 3"*
[20] *"Carter, p. 33"*

According to Jerry Heitzmann of Bay St. Louis, "upon Jean Cadet's death in 1852, his property holdings were huge and included the Ansley tracts from the Claiborne Section extending nearly to Clermont Harbor." [21]

Jean Cadet de La Fontaine established a long lineage of generations fostering his name. The LaFontaine's populate Hancock County with a large number of families. One in particular is world famous Pierre LaFontaine, none other than Pete Fountain, the renown clarinetist who still maintains a home in Bay St. Louis.

World famous clarinetist Pete Fountain's real name is Pierre LaFontaine. As a descendant of the original de LaFontaine's, he too, was born on the Coast.

During the Spanish regime, Juan de Cuevas jumped from his vessel to the pier while moored at Cat Island. Upon being introduced to the daughters of Christian and Marianne, Juan immediately succumbed to the charm of the second to youngest girl, Marie Helene. He was enthralled by her beauty and grace. He was captivated. Even though she was only fifteen years of age, Juan returned to marry Marie and was invited to stay on the island even after the sons and daughters departed for the mainland or to New Orleans. Christian and Marianne soon afterwards moved to their beach front land-grant with son Claude. Juan and Marie continued to reside at Cat Island. One of their sons, Francois, went up the Bay of St. Louis proceeding up the Jourdan River and the Rotten Bayou and settled in the area of Diamondhead. The Rotten Bayou Cemetery exists because of him. He and his wife Felicite are buried there.

The Cuevas home was the first European residence in Diamondhead, when Indians were still very much around. It was located on Rotten Bayou near the present residence of George Cassis at Malahini Place. The home was built in the early 1800s and destroyed by fire after 1930. *(Courtesy of Ames Kergosien of Bay St. Louis, a great-grandson of Cyrille Cuevas, one of the eleven children of Francois and Felicete Cuevas, for whom the Rotten Bayou Cemetery was dedicated.)*

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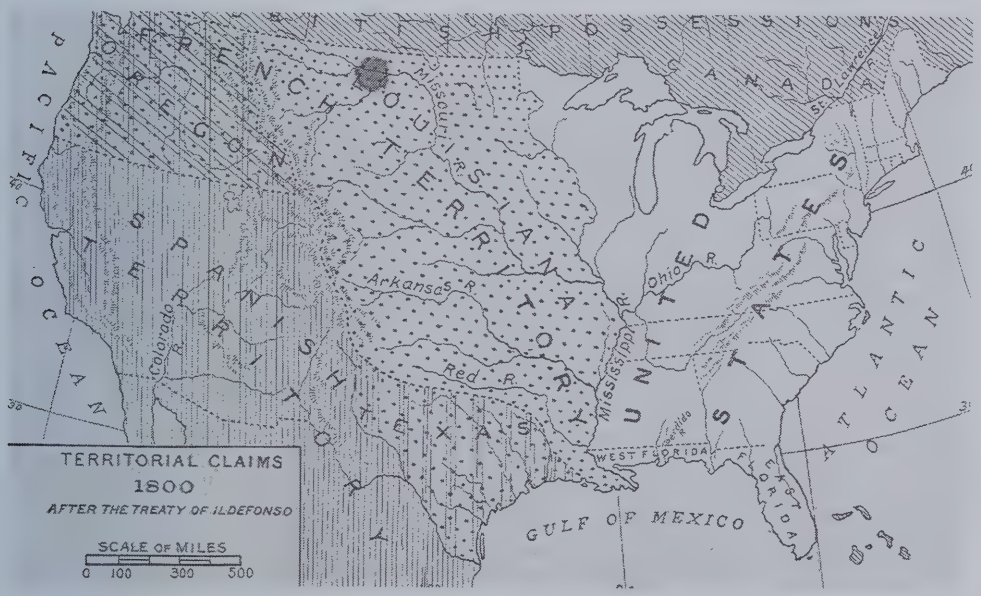
[21] *"The Coast of Mississippi, Hancock Bank, p. 12"*

As time passed, several regions around the Bay were being taken up by such originators as Jean Baptiste Nicaise, Chevalier Dedeaux, Pierre Moran, and Joseph Labat to add to existing settlers such as Saucier, the Ladners, and the Cuevas.

"Why did these [pioneering people] stay, fanning out to lay the foundations of the sister cities from Bay St. Louis to Pascagoula? Without a doubt, they had come to love these shores, the usually calm surf with the majestic live oaks marching down to meet the waters of the Sound, the tranquil, slowly winding bayous, salty breezes, silver-tipped whitecaps, and of course, the sea's constant largess." [22]

As a result of several warring activities, there was a short period of time where the Coastal area ownership was shifted from one Nation's control to another. The British took possession of the territory in 1763. They took some of Florida and some of Louisiana and created the fifteenth colony which they called West Florida. When the original 13 colonies rebelled in 1776, the two Florida colonies remained loyal to King George III of England. In 1779 the Spanish appropriated the two Floridas hoisting their colors adorned by Lions and Castles. The Spaniards held Louisiana until the year 1800, when it was ceded to France. Napoleon couldn't hold it against the English so he sold it to the United States on April 30, 1803.



This land distribution map indicates the two Floridas. West Florida expanded the Coast from Baton Rouge to Pensacola surrounded by the French Territory of Louisiana and the United States and the Spanish Territory.

During this period, West Florida had become settled by a population count of eight to ten thousand, many of whom were Americans. They got tired of the Flag switching so in 1810 the Spanish

[22] *"The Coast of Mississippi, Hancock Bank, inside front cover fly leaf."*

reign in the West Florida Territory was ended. Rebelling Americans in Baton Rouge established independence by raising the *Lone Star Flag*. Later, on October 29, 1810, the revolutionaries placed the Mississippi Territory under the jurisdiction of the United States.

In 1812 the district south of the 31st parallel between Pearl River extending to the Bay of Biloxi was made the County of Hancock. It was named for John Hancock, the president of the Continental Congress and first signature on the Declaration of Independence.

To confuse matters further, the State of Georgia, during the whole of this period, also laid claim to nearly all of the Mississippi Territory. They called it the County of Bourbon. When Mississippi was admitted as a State into the Union in 1817, Georgia voted against its admission to Statehood. As a consequence, there have been many contests regarding property ownerships over the years due to overlapping land grants to the same territory.

The Pirates

Another flag had fluttered both ashore as well as throughout the waters along the Gulf Coast. It was the flag of the Pirates. Besides the pirate Captain Pitcher, Lafitte scurried throughout all of the water inlets from Grand Isle in Louisiana to Pass Christian. Several of his kin remained ashore to settle along the coast. Then, too, there was the King Pirate of the Honey Island Swamp, the ignoble Pierre Rameau.

Captain Pitcher had established a hide-out between what is now Pass Christian and the western edge of Long Beach. This is now referred to as Pitcher's Point. During his many voyages, all of his crewmen learned to despise him. He had a tree house built high into the branches of a tall Oak. When ashore, the pirate would hike up a rope ladder to his tree-house to sleep. He made it a habit not to mingle with his men. However, one day he had taken extra liberties in confronting an Indian wench who belonged to one of his crew members. After falling asleep the crew placed dry brush all around the base of the tree and set it afire. Pitcher, realized that he could not escape. He bellowed out profanities upon all of the men and cursed all the land around him with prophetic death and tragedy.

Captain Pitcher is one of the more famous Pirates to take haven in Mississippi inlets. His curse at Pitcher's Point, between Pass Christian and Long Beach, has merited a long history of recorded devastation for that area.

"Over the centuries, the beach area of Pass Christian and Long Beach have suffered more than their share of killer storms and tornadoes. On the very same spot where [Captain Pitcher's] tree house was planted, a motel, a retreat home, a magnificent mansion called *Mount Vernon*, and even a housing subdivision have become casualties to the curse. Since then, many killer storms and unwarranted fires have raged havoc and destruction even upon the neighboring areas adjoining Pitcher's Point." [23]

New Orleans makes a strong claim on Jean Lafitte who was the most famous of all the pirates who scavenged the coastal areas from Galveston, Texas to Mobile, Alabama. Because of his participation in the Battle of New Orleans by helping to thwart the British, he was given exoneration. Jean Lafitte had been born of Jewish descent in 1789 in the town of Port-au-Prince, Haiti. Many stories have been told of his infamous journeys. After his pardon in New Orleans, he was reported to have disappeared in the West Indies. However in 1825, a person by the name of Jean Lafito bought a tract of land in Bay St. Louis from Jean and Genevieve Nicaise. There, this Jean Lafito built his home and died in 1850. "Lafitte also reportedly owned an earlier house in Waveland which has become known as the *Pirate House* which dates back to 1802. Unfortunately it was washed away during the Camille maelstrom." [24]

A story goes that "one of Jean Lafitte's pirates slipped away from the moorings at one of the Coast inlets and took off with some of the booty in order to bury the cache at DeLisle. In carrying the hefty chest, he also took along his huge vicious dog which was left at the treasure site to perform guard duty. The buccaneer, however, was killed while plundering for more treasures. The dog continued his vigilance until dying of old age. It is still told by many folks at DeLisle that the ghost of the dog lives on. It has been reported to be seen beneath an old Oak tree on dark nights as it prowls and growls all night long at the banks of the Wolf river." [25]

Stories continue even today about the Pirate's Dog of DeLisle. Folks claim dog sightings and howlings at various times of the year.

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[23] *"Sun Herald, November 11, 1992."*

[24] *"Oliver, p. 35"*

[25] *"Tarpon-Beacon, December 1, 1977"*

Coastal Water Actions

The Battle of New Orleans

The famous Battle of New Orleans was won by the Americans over the English during the War of 1812. Losses: Americans 80; British 300. A peace treaty had been signed the month before in Europe, however, the significant Battle gave heroic notoriety to Andrew Jackson who later became President.

W.C.C. Claiborne, Governor of the Louisiana Territory, claimed possession of the West Florida Territory for the United States in 1810. On the ninth of the first month of 1811, a small armada arrived from New Orleans led by the sloop, the "Alligator". Dr. William Flood hoisted the American Flag announcing his position of control over the water ways to the Gulf of Mexico in preparing to vanquish the British. He had the stores at Shieldsborough (Bay St. Louis) burned and appointed Philip Saucier as Justice of the Peace for the area flanking the Bay. Within two weeks, General Wade Hampton ordered 200 U.S Troops to the embankments at Pass Christian. This martialing of troops was closely followed by 800 British legions whose Commander almost drowned while debarking his ship onto a most unstable skiff. As the skiff rolled with the swells of the Mississippi Sound, the Commander was tossed into the water sinking without the promise of coming back up. Two of the British boatmen jumped into the water, carrying their unconscious leader back upon his command ship.

When Juan Cuevas escaped the English and hastily went to the Rigolets to warn the Americans, little did he know he was to become the Gulf Coast's Paul Revere.

Governor Claiborne continued to assert control of the Bay area and the peninsula of Pass Christian. As the aggression to dominate the "Pass" and its surrounding water-ways continued, the area became used as a staging ground for military thrusts by American troops in pursuit of English positions strewn along the coast near Mobile and Pensacola. It was near the end of the War of 1812 that a British brigade invaded Cat Island and slaughtered much of the cattle for food stock. They captured Juan (Jean) Cuevas and kept him imprisoned. He managed to escape and seek out the Americans at the Rigolets, bordering Lake Pontchartrain near New Orleans. He reported the British deployment on Cat Island which resulted in an American preparedness in the defense of New Orleans.

Engaging a superior British force, action was taken by Lieutenant Thomas Ap Catesby Jones aboard his flagship the *Seahorse*. "Tac" Jones had been ordered to sink are be sunk as he heralded his small American fleet of five gun boats and two tenders. He had anchored his vessels just west of Pass Christian during the night. Through mishap, the tide went out and his fleet was bogged down in the sands. Sighting the oncoming British boats he ordered his men to

toss everything non-strategic overboard. They slowly became released and the British chased them into Lake Borgne. They once more became bogged down in the muddy flats of the Rigolets where they took a stand as a delaying action to further prepare General Andrew Jackson on land. Jone's defeat was reported as 300 British wounded or killed, - 80 Americans wounded or killed.

This battle should not have been waged, because a Peace Treaty had been signed more than a month before, but word had not yet reached the British or the Americans. However, the naval battle still rages today in the communities of Pass Christian and Bay St. Louis. The Pass citizens call it the *Battle of Pass Christian*, whereas the Bay citizens call it the *Battle of Bay St. Louis.*

The War Between the States

During the Civil War, one of the effectual warfare tools put into play by the Federal forces was the Union naval blockade of all Southern ports. The blockade prevented the South from exporting cotton and its agricultural resources as well as eliminating the importation of required munitions and necessary weaponry.

Five year old Alma was separated from her parents during a storm at sea. She was picked up by a Union boat and brought to Ship Island where she was then transported under a Flag of Truce which was fired upon by renegade Rebels. This caused a rippling effect which ended in bombardment of all the Coastal communities by the Federal troops.

The Confederate coastal defenses were under the command of Major General Mansfield Lovell headquartered in New Orleans. He established the stratagem which was to follow. In his line of command was Col. John B. Deason, who was in charge of defending the Mississippi coast-line. He placed seven companies at Handsboro (now inland Gulfport) and three companies of the Confederate *Third Mississippi* Regiment at Pass Christian led by Lt. Col. T. A. Mellon of the Dahlgren Guards. Their encampment was established at Camp Tugville, which was stationed two miles northeast of Pass Christian. It was located near the intersection of White Rock Road (now Menge Avenue and formerly called Red Creek Road) and Pass Road. [26]

Major General Benjamin F. Butler was in command of 20,000 Federal troops assembled at Ship Island. Under a Flag of Truce he ordered to be transported to Biloxi, a young survivor of a ship wreck. After depositing the young girl, the ship baring the Flag of Truce was fired upon by some Rebels. Butler went into a rage and ordered troops and artillery to sail immediately for Biloxi to demand and obtain an apology. The Union force landed in Biloxi led by Col. Thomas Cahill of the *9th Connecticut Volunteers* Regiment. He deployed his

[26] *"Howell p. 110"*

companies so that Biloxi was surrounded.

In response, on April 2, 1862, Major General Lovell, at New Orleans sent Commodore Whittle to attack the Union gunboats with three Confederate gunboats. He also sent marching orders to Captain Green's Dahlgren Guard to join the other companies of the *Third Mississippi* at Handsboro. The Union frigate and gunboats were also sent to attack positions in Pass Christian and Bay St. Louis on the way to Lake Borgne. They took anchor south of Mississippi City, a hamlet between Biloxi and Pass Christian. While waiting the night of April 3rd upon the *Henry Lewis*, the Yankees woke up to sight three Rebel gunboats heading at them and firing shots. In the exchange of fire, the Rebels sustained more damage and began to disengage while returning towards New Orleans. With the Union ships in pursuit the Rebel gunboats were faster and made their escape. [27]

The *Henry Lewis* arrived at Pass Christian short of noon on April 4th and ran aground just 300 yards from the pier. Four and a half feet of water and 500 yards kept the other Yankee gunboats at bay. Some remaining troops at the *Pass* attempted to set fire to the cotton bales stacked on the pier, but were warded off by discharging Federal cannon balls from the *Jackson*.

The *Bedsheet Surrender* is well noted by the folks in Pass Christian as Mrs. Manders aggressively waved her bedding to cause the Yankee frigates to end their cannon fire upon the Town's mansions.

Expecting heavy resistance and assuming that the billowing smoke from the bales of hay to be cannon fire, the Federal gunboats fired many volleys upon the *Pass*. With shells exploding all over and fragments tearing through their homes, the inhabitants expected the town to be torn to shambles. They were filled with fear and concern that continued bombardment would rip the whole town apart. Mrs. Jane Murphy Manders, living very close to the pier, pulled a sheet from her bed and waved it vigorously from her second floor bannister. This incident became known as the *Bedsheet Surrender.* [28]

Landing boats unloaded many of the Yankee troops at late noon. The *Henry Lewis* soon afterward moored alongside the pier. The Union officers had taken billeting at the Saucier house on the Beach front and had been apprised that the burning hay at the pier had not been cannon shot. It was here that they realized that they had conquered an almost empty village except for the ladies and men too old to go to war. They were entertained during the evening by their hostess, Mrs. Mary Walker Saucier, who was obliged to play *Bonnie Blue Flag.* [This elegant home is still very much intact and is located at 227 E. Scenic Drive, Pass Christian.]

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[27] *"Howell, p. 114"*

[28] *"Scholtes, p. 17"*

They embarked once more to return to Ship Island. Upon their leaving a committee of *Pass* citizens expressed their gratitude for the good conduct of the soldiers and the protection of home and property. They departed on April 4th.

On April 25, 1862, New Orleans fell to Admiral David Farragut. The following week, the command was turned over to Major General Butler.

Kilns and the Piney Woods

There were many towns such as Logtown, Fenton, and the Kiln which were active communities with Railroad Depots, Hotels and hospitals which had downgraded during the *Great Depression* and never recovered to their prior status. They are now pleasant residential villages.

Mississippi's extensive pine and cypress timber forests were quite awesome with exceptionally towering trees. Following the first settlements, timber was cut and exported to France for construction of their naval fleet. The areas north of the Bay abounded with forests full of tall standing yellow pine. In addition to lumber mills, the early settlers built huge kilns which produced pine tar, with charcoal as a by-product from the fire under the kilns. Turpentine, which is used for paint, was distilled in the stills from resin or sap from virgin, yellow pine trees. The large ovens were also used to dry and cure lumber. This section of Hancock County was at one time referred to as Three Rivers Mission. The Wolf River to the East, the Jourdan in the middle, and the Pearl River flows on the West.

Fenton

Fenton was one such early sawmill town situated just north of Diamondhead. It is located four miles west of Kiln on a road initially cut through the Jourdan River Swamp. Logs were hauled through the swampy terrain on ox-wagons to waiting barges on the Jourdan River. Slave labor was brought in to work the timber forests. The Fenton Turpentine Co. during its peak was producing 2500 Barrels of Spirits and 10,000 barrels of rosin. [29]

For many years, Fenton maintained a Negro settlement just east of the town which was populated solely by descendants of slaves originating from Senegal. Their forefathers were considered to have

[29] "*Sketch Book of Hancock County, p. 37*"

the highest mental and physical qualities of all African slaves. This resulted in their restricting intermarriages outside of their group. By controlled inbreeding, they succeeded in maintaining an unmixed bloodline.

Fenton was also the birthplace of the renown poet of the Cuevas family. In 1934 Earl Cuevas was conferred with national recognition as "Poet Laureate of Mississippi by the Poet Laureate League of America in Washington D.C. He was honored for his works and attributes and as a poetic genius." [30]

The Kiln (the Kill)

Early French settlements in the Piney woods north of the Bay established the value of the forests as a major resource for lumber which was exported to many countries. When the industry played out, many of the remaining kilns became sites of whiskey stills in the illegal production of *Moonshine*.

The Kiln, located to the west of Diamondhead, and just ten miles north of Waveland, was named for all the large kilns built by the early French settlers. Noel Jourdan, for which the River is named had been awarded a Spanish land grant which included the area of Diamondhead. He made his home at Hickory Point. Jean Baptiste Necaise married Marie Catherine Meaut in DeLisle on May 11, 1745. They became early settlers of the Kiln area. Captain Samuel Favre left Mobile for the Kiln in 1859 whose home is recognized as the oldest in the area. He built a sawmill and operated a general store next to it. In the early 1900s the largest sawmill in the South was built by W. W. Carre only to burn down a few years later. A railroad was constructed in order to haul out lumber and to accommodate passengers. This was followed by the building of a fifty room hotel and a company hospital. In the process of new construction and renovations, legends became alive about Pirate treasures having been buried in the area. It was not unusual for dwellers to awaken to find their yards had been dug up during the night.

"During the Prohibition [era] the territory around Kiln was the center of a moonshining industry and was known for its quality of whiskey as far north as Milwaukee, Wisconsin. It is said that one boat alone brought 1,000 sacks of sugar a week here for the manufacture of [whiskey at] the famous kiln [called] *Shinny*." [31] With the Great Depression, the town lost its sawmill, its hotel, its hospital and its railroad. Many folks left while those who remained eked out a living by distilling illegal whiskey. This was more commonly called *White Lightning* or *Jourdan River Dew* which was 180 proof. The Kiln became known as the *Moonshine Capital of the World*. The Bay and its surrounding waters, in particular the Jourdan River, were waterways well known to Al Capone and his gang as they ran their ex-Coast

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[30] *"Cuevas, p. 19"*

[31] *" Brieger, p. 157"*

Guard cutter up the waters bringing illegal whiskey and rum from Cuba. This wet booty was unloaded at Hickory Point and trucked overland to Chicago.

Local Coastians have their own way of pronouncing names. The town of Kiln is called *The Kill.*

Early Tourism and Resort Development

In 1849, the first yacht club on the Gulf Coast was formed and was called the SOUTHERN YACHT CLUB. This was the second yacht club initiated in the United States and was the origination of the club which later was moved to New Orleans from Pass Christian.

Until 1928, the main roadway access to the Mississippi Coast from New Orleans was around the Bay of St. Louis by way of the Kiln-DeLisle road which took 30 minutes from Waveland to Pass Christian.

Modes of transportation were changing. The L & N railway system was completed in the 1840s. Buses replaced streetcars. All of the Gulf Coast of Mississippi was becoming alive resulting in a continuous flow of traffic arriving everyday during the summers by automobile in processions along Highway 90. In nearby Henderson Point, new developments were taking place in expansion for entertainment spots which were overflowing the *Pass.* In 1920, the *Inn by the Sea*, a luxury hotel, was built. Annie's Restaurant was opened followed by Bennie French's. In 1928, canals were being dug to connect the bayous in Pass Christian Isles. This opened opportunities for hundreds of middle class and *nouveau riche* Orleanians to purchase waterfront property adjoining the *Pass.*

Before the first bridge across the Bay of St. Louis was built in 1928, the main thoroughfare was the Kiln-DeLisle road that led from New Orleans to the Mississippi Coast. Along the route was the beautiful Bay Shores area known as Pine Hills. Its first development was in 1850 by William A. Whitfield who founded the Shelly Plantation. In 1926 a hugh hotel building complex was built and touted as the *Jewel of the Gulf.* The assembly of buildings adjoined each other spiraling upwards to four stories of height and centered by a six story tower. The Hotel consisted of 180 rooms furnished with Persian rugs and tile baths. There was even an 18-hole golf course. Following three heady, delirious years of success, the *Shangri La* resort became destined to fall into bankruptcy due to the Great Depression of the '30s. The completion of the new Bay bridge from Bay St. Louis to Pass Christian made a direct route expanding along the Beach area towns.

There were many resort hotels which had been built in communities such as Waveland, Bay St. Louis, DeLisle, Pass Christian and Biloxi. During the summers the Orleanians and Upstate Mississippians made their weekend pilgrimages, and during the Winters, tourists from Northern States arrived in droves. It was not unusual to find signs throughout the South that stated, *We Serve Northern Coffee.*

The Hotel was later taken over by a Catholic order as a Seminary to train priests. Reverend Father John Taylor arrived on the Coast in June of 1953 to convert the abandoned Pine Hills Hotel into a modern, efficient seminary. This was known as the Seminary of the Oblates of Mary Immaculate, Our Lady of the Snows Scholasticate, Pine Hills. However, the Seminary was closed in August of 1968. This 80 acre site was purchased by the adjoining DuPont Plant in 1983 as a good neighbor buffer zone. The DuPont plant facility occupies 200 acres of a 2,280 acre site in the Dupont/DeLisle Forest. [Access is by way of Interstate 10, Interchange Exit 20]

Over many years, until 1960, gambling along the coast, even though illegal, gave rise to the infamous title of the *Gold Coast.* However, the Congressional hearings resulted in terminating the Gambling Halls. All of the Coast and all of the neighboring cities around New Orleans closed down their gaming operations. It took the Federal government to shut down a most sagacious era of Coastal history.

John H. Lang, a prominent former resident of the Pass and the Coast, appropriately called the following message *Retrospection.* It was written sometime during the early 1930s.

> *"When we consider the fact that from the discovery of the County in 1699 to the investigation by Capt. Flood in 1811, that there were only 770 people between the Alabama and Louisiana lines, we can realize how slow the growth had been. From 1811 to 1870 the population had increased to about 4,000 people including the 20 miles of Harrison County now in Stone County. Since 1870 and up to 1930 the population had increased to something more than 40,000, and would now be about 45,000. It seems incredible that the northeast and northwest should have gained so tremendously.*
>
> *I now make the prediction that as soon as the present depression subsides and conditions become normal, there well be in 1950, 60,000 people in Harrison County. Situated as we are, in the healthiest county in the United States, with no prevailing diseases, no tornadoes, no annual freezes, no drought, no dust storms, which as Will Rogers says, causes people to look up to view their lands instead of looking down, where a living can be easily made, it seems to me that people will gradually find this out and come to this truly "God's Country."*

A review of John Lang's perception of Coastal property values is most interesting inspite of his being off the mark from current appraisals.

In 1908 I predicted that the beach lands would, before many years, be sought after, to such an extent, that the lands would increase in value. In 1925 this prediction came true. Outside people bid up the lands to as high as $210 per front foot for lands that before could be bought at from $5.00 to $7.00 per foot." [32]

- - - John H. Lang

The Gulf Coast became a booming mecca for tourists and vacationers year round. Northerners came down during the winter and New Orleanians arrived during the summer months. The Coast continued a renewed cycle of economic growth, that is, until the depression of the '30s.

Expansion and Revival

As World War II came to its end and the returning troops proceeded to seek their new fortunes, life once more became adventuresome. In time, the Gulf Coast once more unfolded its beauty. During the '50s and '60s, the Walker Brothers had been highly successful in exploding lot sales and home construction in Henderson Point and Pass Christian Isles. Pete Fountain became a Vice President of Timber Ridge, in promoting the Pass Christian resort area. Discovery Bay, north of Pass Christian, was touted by Pat Boone. From near and far, people purchased land in seeking to eke out a niche for future retirement or weekend living. Water sports and Golfing recreation have been highly developed along the Coast creating a major national attraction. Then Camille struck in August of 1969. However, following Camille's wrath and destruction to the Coastal towns and with the imminent completion of Interstate 10, much of the Gulf Coast development and acquisition became centered on Diamondhead. Here was the potential for a community in the raw being planned on high-ground with direct access from east and west.

The 50s and 60s opened many areas along the Mississippi Coast for land and housing speculation and development. Most have had moderate success as compared to the dynamic and explosive performance emanated by Diamondhead's fortune.

[32] *"Lang, p. 234"*

The Coast pursued a steady growth and upon entering the 1990s, Gambling Casinos re-entered the scene with full support of State government. The Mississippi coastal area has risen once more as the Phoenix from its ashes, to once again become the uncontested Gold Coast. In a period of just two years growth, the prosperity of the gaming portions of the Gulf Coast has become akin to Las Vegas. With the glitz and the ritz of neon and lazar lights and the panorama of fireworks in addition to the blitz of people arriving daily by car, van, rail and air has become fantastic.

New face lifts have been put on Waveland and Bay St. Louis. Highway 90 through Bay St. Louis has new motels and lighted lamp posts with flags waving. The widening of Hwy. 603 from the Kiln to Waveland is a signal benefit to the area. New bridges on the DeLisle-Pass Christian road presents quicker access to the beaches from Interstate 10 and Diamondhead traffic.

All of Gulf Coast Country has a filled agenda of annual events befitting every occasion for every month of the year. New celebrations and festivities are announced ever more frequently. One such long standing event is the Labor Day weekend celebration which has become quite a momentous occasion for yacht clubs of the Gulf Yachting Association. This event is due to the originating contribution of the Lipton Challenge Trophy instituted by Sir Thomas Lipton in 1919.

This past July of 1994 the Lipton Cup challenge celebrated its Diamond Anniversary. In its 75th year, a tribute continues for the man who set such high standards for sportsmanship. Sir Thomas made the word *Sportsmanship* come alive for all those who knew him and competed against him. Sir Thomas was the founder of the Lipton Tea Company and was a self-made millionaire by the age of twenty-one. Through his inspiration, each year the Regatta has continued to grow. Regardless of war or hurricanes, the Lipton Regatta has never been canceled, not even by Hurricane Camille's visit in 1969.

Sportsmanship as promulgated by Sir Thomas Lipton, has been celebrated by all the yacht clubs of the Gulf Yachting Association since 1919. 1994 acclaimed the 75th Libton sailing Regatta.

"*Racing classes have been developed here; the twenty-one-foot Marconi rig sloops, knockabouts, the little Gulf One and Penguin designs, and the cat-rigged Fish class boats that compete for a Lipton trophy. Eight clubs compete in the Labor Day race for the Lipton award. St. Petersburg, the Pensacola Navy Air Base, Mobile, Biloxi, Gulfport, Pass Christian, Bay St. Louis, and New Orleans - - - and they race not only at summer's end but weekly during the summer. From early June until late September the yachting events follow each other, the long-distance race from the Southern Yacht Club in New Orleans to Biloxi, or Gulport, the annual Regatta of the Biloxi Club, long-distance races from one town to another on the Coast, junior and senior, all-girl and novice races, the*

Lipton trophy race. It was (a hundred and fifty years ago) that the Southern Yacht Club with headquarters now in New Orleans was born at Pass Christian, and there has not been a year since in peace or in war that sailboats have not raced in Gulf waters." [33]

Legacy of the Flags

Mississippians like to recount the history of their flags as numbering eight banners. The first was actually planted in 1682 by LaSalle with the French Standard known for the House of Bourbon represented by the *Golden Fleur de Lis* in a field of white. d'Iberville planted the flag for a second time in 1699. When the British arrested control of the territory in 1773 they took some of Florida and some of Louisiana and created the fifteenth colony which they called West Florida and raised their flag known as the *British Red Ensign*. When the original 13 colonies rebelled in 1776, the two Florida colonies remained loyal to King George III of England.

In 1779 the Spanish appropriated the two Floridas hoisting their colors decorated with *Lions and Castles*. Spanish reign in the West Florida Territory was ended by a rebellion of Americans in Baton Rouge who raised the *Lone Star Flag* in 1810 celebrating the independence of the Republic of West Florida. When Mississippi became a State in 1817, they flew the *American Flag with fifteen stars and fifteen stripes*. In 1861, Mississippi adopted its official State flag combining the *Lone Star with the Magnolia tree*. Upon secession later in 1861, the *Confederate Stars and Bars* was flown. In 1865, the renewed American Flag was raised. The current State flag was adopted combining the Confederate Stars and Bars with the traditional Magnolia tree. [34]

1699	1773	1779	1810	1817	1861	1861	1865	1970
French Fleur de Lis	English Red Ensign	Spanish Lions & Castles	West Fla. Lone Star	American 15 Stars & Stripes	Statehood Lone Star & Magnolia	Cession Confederate Stars & Bars	American Stars Stripes	Diamondhead D'head Logo

[33] *"Carter, p. 111"*

[34] *"Oliver, p. 22"*

The Diamondhead Heritage

Many Midwesterners have grown fond of Diamondhead, especially during the winter months. The average daily temperature in November and December ranges from 50 to 75 degrees.

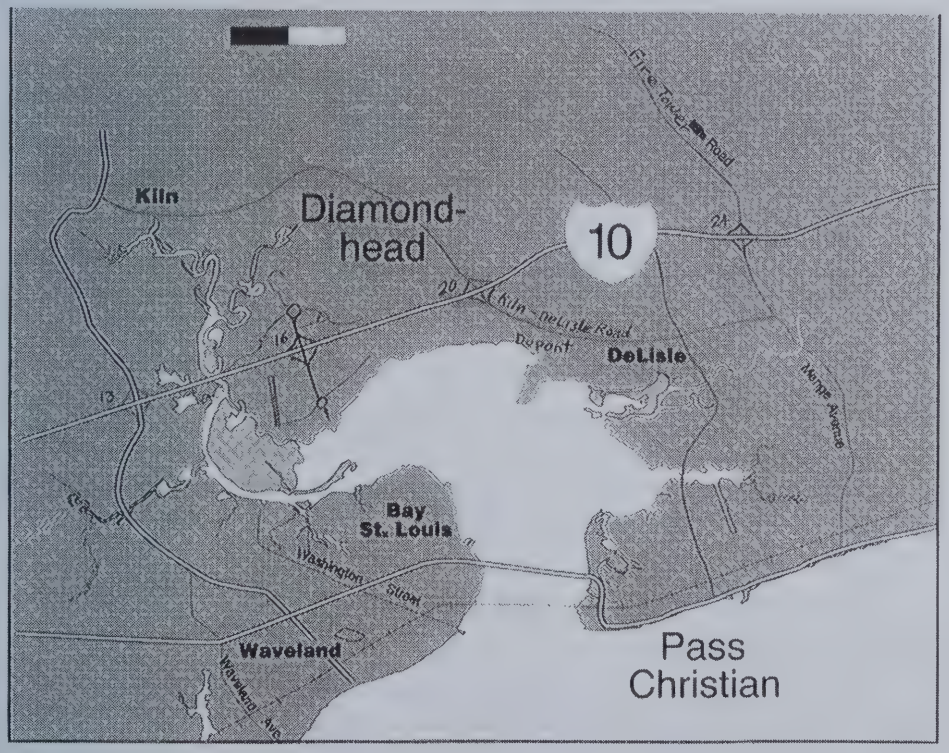
Diamondhead, Mississippi is a most unique resort and retirement community. Diamondhead provides a private setting with a Country Club life-style. Its location, elevation and overall size make it an exceptional residential community on the Mississippi Gulf Coast. Its climate has an average daily temperature of 68 degrees punctuated by an average of 300 days a year of golden sunshine. Diamondhead enjoys mild weather conditions, ranging from 50 to 75 degrees in November and December. Summer breezes off the Gulf of Mexico and the Bay of St. Louis usually keep the weather in the 75 to 90 degree range. The Coastal summers provide a year-round attraction for people from all over the world.

Summertime draws many southern residents and visitors seeking a family vacation spot in a resort setting. Diamondhead provides a series of lifetime pleasures and experiences for those who want to live in paradise. Residential home-sites or select condominiums offer fun time living surrounded by fabulous facilities. [1]

[1] *"Diamondhead, Mississippi, Coast Delta Realty Fact Sheet, p. 1"*

Diamondhead is but an hour of easy driving from New Orleans or Baton Rouge, Louisiana; or, an hour and a half from Mobile, Alabama; and an hour or two from many locations throughout Mississippi. A significant number of Midwesterners have found Diamondhead to be an ideal location for their second home and a place to retire. Much of the Midwest is but a one day drive. Access to both private and public air transportation is most convenient. Moisant International Airport at New Orleans is a little more than an hour's driving time and the Gulfport/Biloxi Regional Airport is less than a half hour away. Diamondhead has its own private Airstrip providing hanger space or tie down facilities. The attractions, due to location and weather, are many. They include two golf courses, tennis courts, and a population of amiable residents who add to the *joie de vivre*. Diamondhead, often abbreviated to D'head, is without traffic congestion --- no crowding, low stress, low cost of living, and a safe-zone, literally free of crime. D'head is accessible to the Gulf Coast by several exits along the ribbon of Interstate I-10. The white sand beaches and antebellum homes at Pass Christian can be reached by less than 10 miles of roadway through historic DeLisle.

Diamondhead is without traffic congestion, no crowding, low cost of living, and a safe zone, literally free of crime.



The Diamondhead Area Map displays the arena of communities surrounding the Bay of St. Louis. The Bay is divided by Hancock and Harrison Counties. New Orleans to the West is reached in less than an hour and the drive to Mobile to the East is within an hour and a half.

The Gex Heritage

The original Gex acreage was purchased by Walter Gex, Jr. in 1937 from the Gulf State Paper Company and the Easy Opener Bag Company. These two pieces approximated 3700 acres. Additional acreage was later accumulated which brought the acquisitions to approximately 5000 acres. This property was sold in October of 1969 to D.E.A.R, Inc., an interim company representing the developer's interests. Designated shareholders were Malcolm Purcell McLean, the Founder of SeaLand, and the innovator of containerized shipping; and William Maurer, an investor and president of the D.E.A.R. Corporation which later became the Diamondhead Corporation.

The highest elevation at Diamondhead is 105 feet above sea level. That point is located at Highpoint Condos. "That is the highest point between Corpus Christi, Texas, and St. Petersburg, Florida. For this reason, the Development Group called the area Diamondhead," said Jody Gex.

In his law offices above the Merchant's Bank in Bay St. Louis, Jody Gex unrolled a frail parchment map with an oil cloth backing. He described that all of the "X" marks in red were the original Gex acreage. He pointed out the peripheral boundaries indicating that the tract of land almost abutted the back of the Bay of St. Louis and bordered the Jourdan River (or the St. Germain River as originally named by the French) and Rotten Bayou (or the Baneeshewah as named by the Indians). It was mostly high ground which would not require residential terracing or stilted pilings as is sometimes necessary in the low lands nearer the Coast. And the ten square miles were dotted by ponds and small lakes. Pulling out a sheaf of documents, Jody read the County resolution which provided the impetus for the interchange construction at the Interchange of Interstate 10 and Gex Boulevard. The County Road ran from the Kiln-Pass Christian Highway through the Gex tract which was known as Hickory Point Road. The highest elevation at Diamondhead is at Highpoint Condos which is 105 feet above sea level. Jody responded, "That is the highest point between Corpus Christi, Texas and St. Petersburg, Florida. For this reason, the Development Group called the area Diamondhead. The architectural engineers followed through with its Hawaiian derivation." [2]

Actually, the property had almost been sold for development some ten years previous.

W.L. Holcomb with the Real Estate Development company of Holcomb and Milner of Gulfport, was approached by Walter Gex, Sr. in 1960. Gex offered his 5200 acres for sale. Holcomb pursued the

[2] *"Interview with Joseph Gex, February 23,1995"*

prospect by riding the hilly area on horseback. He was amazed at all the tall timber that covered the whole area. Billy Holcomb tells the story that as he alighted from the mount, he walked a ways through a clearing and stumbled into a hole. As he was raising himself, he was confronted by a shotgun pointed at him about 30 feet away.

The man behind the gun yelled out, "What the heck ya doin' here?"

Billy replied, "I'm looking over Walter Gex's land that he wants to sell me!"

"Well, get the heck away from here right now!, stammered the man.

Needless to say, Billy Holcomb mounted his horse and steered clear of the area as he continued to survey the land. He reported to his partner that the land was very impressive for its high elevation and rolling hills. However, he felt that the cost to develop it would be astounding and would take 20 to 25 years to get their money back. The venture was too risky to pursue in light of the undetermined construction of an Interstate highway system. Ten years later the property was sold for twice the offering.

There were a number of people who realized the potential for the area once NASA was established and the I-10 was announced.

Billy continued, "That same man came into my office about two weeks later offering me to purchase 80 acres of land around the Kiln."

The man looked at him real good and said, "Don't I know you? Weren't you riding around my *Moonshine Still* a few weeks back?"

"Yeah, and I'm sure glad you didn't bring in your shotgun this time," stated Billy.

The man grinned. And as things go, Billy Holcomb bought the property at the Kiln. W.L. Holcomb is still very much active in day to day activities as a partner in Coast Delta Realty. [3]

The Transformation

In every land deal there has to be a *Chief Mechanic*. Somebody has to put the package together and have the foresight and hindsight to market it to the right promoters. It was Gary Gilmore who had the inside track to put a pulse to the embryonic form which was to become Paradise.

The first property sale which opened the door for the Diamondhead development was the commercial property where the Texaco station is presently located off Interstate 10.

[3] *"Interview with W.L. Holcomb, June 23, 1995"*

Gulf Coastal approaches east and west from Diamondhead are easy access to New Orleans and Mobile including approaches to the miles and miles of Mississippi Beaches in Hancock and Harrison County which are reached within minutes.

These machinations date back to 1967 and 1968. Gary was a close associate of the Gex family who were youthful inheritors of the Gex property. Walter Gex, Sr. was the mastermind to acquire the large acreage. Gary also knew Mr. Gex, Sr. who he called "Uncle Walter". Gary came to learn the hills and the high ground turf of the Gex Property because he traversed it frequently during quail hunting trips with "Uncle Walter". While the young Walter Gex had been practicing law in Jackson, he asked Gary to participate in selling a site portion which is the present Texaco Station. Its location was excellent due to the coming Interstate 10 throughway. Once Gary sold the option to the property he became looked on as the man who could make things happen. --- And, happen they did. His connections with a principal from Greenwood, Mississippi put him in position to roll out the 5000 acres of Gex property. This is how Malcolm McLean was introduced to his future Paradise. The Deal was set to go down on Monday, August 18, 1969, the final day of the option. It almost splintered apart because on the very Sunday before, Camille's perilous journey caused almost total destruction to much of the Coastal area. However, McLean managed to fly over the property the following week and upon seeing such little damage, his interest in renewing the option remained strong. The only thing keeping the sale from being closed that week was that because of the Storm, the Hancock Court system had been closed down to all transactions for a couple of weeks.

Pictured from left to right, are: Pat Godley, Booze Campbell, Al Scarborogh, Ken Allen, Gene Lewis, W.H. Maurer, Holcomb Hector, Donny Simmons, Russell Necaise, Bill Ware, Charlie Allen and Richard Darden. This was the origination crew to formulate Diamondhead from its inception in 1970.

During the first phase of construction the Diamondhead Manufacturing Company in Mobile hired local construction crews to build the Kona and Molokai Condo Villages.

In the next phase, the Condo Villages of Lanai, Lakeside and the Fairway Inn were pre-constructed including even the painted

sheetrock, carpeting and drapes. A special barge was built to carry the 50' by 30' units from Mobile and reclaimed from the Rotten Bayou landing. A customized straddle carrier moved the prestuctured units to elevated pods which allowed flat bed trucks to skale under and move the housing units to their respective sites. A crane then lifted up the unit and placed it on prepared foundations. The Condos only needed finishing touches of steps and roofing. [4]

The Hawaiian Heritage

Southeast of Honolulu, Hawaii is the Island of Oahu. As if rising from the waters is the great and magnificent promontory of Diamond Head. Hickory Point, Mississippi was a far cry from the image presented by the original Diamond Head, but not in the mind's eye of its proponent.

Through Malcolm Purcell McLean's leadership, Diamondhead was a signal achievement which led to the success of other land promotions. These included other developments which were in various stages of phasing, such as: Pinehurst in North Carolina, Lake Arrowhead, near Atlanta, Sandpiper Cove in Destin, Lake Forest outside Mobile, Newport near Houston, Mile High east of El Paso, and Falconhead between Dallas and Oklahoma City. However, none were nearly as spectacular as Diamondhead. In the first marketing brochure, the essence of melding Hawaiian island tropics with the piney wood-lands and marshes became instant Mississippi Gold.

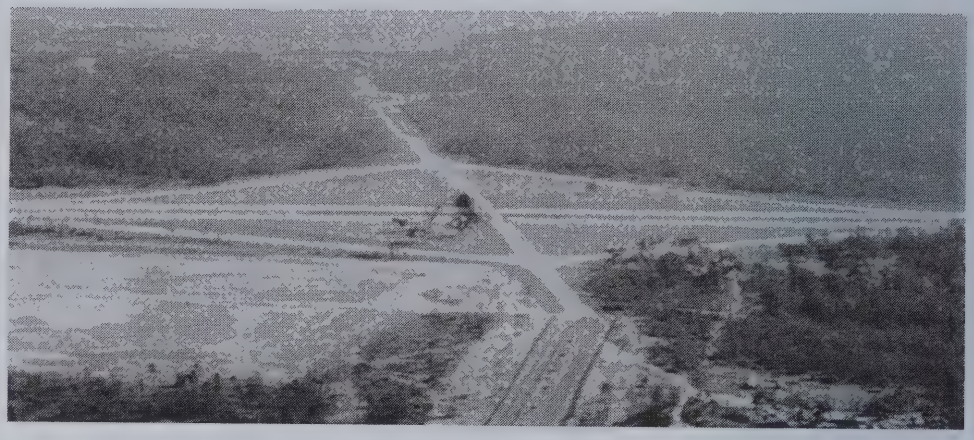
> "Right out of the islands, with all of its exotic beauty and charm, comes the inspiration for DIAMONDHEAD, a residential resort community located on the highest point on the beautiful Mississippi Gulf Coast. Dramatically designed facilities grace the gently rolling terrain and sparkling blue water ways offering a lifestyle that features championship golf, water sports with marina facilities, swim and tennis club, riding club and stables, neighborhood recreation centers plus outstanding luxury condominiums and beautifully wooded home-sites.

HE AHA KE MEA HOU
What's new?
MELE KALIKIMAKA
Merry Christmas
HAUOLI MAKAHIKI HOU
Happy New Year
ALOHA OUKOU
Greetings of love to all
A HUI HOU KAVA
Until we meet again

[4] *"Interview with Gary Gilmore, June 1, 1995"*

Sound like a vacation? . . . DIAMONDHEAD can be yours, exclusively, for every day the rest of your life." [5]

However, Interstate 10 was opening up stretches of completion. Thousands of Louisianians from New Orleans and Baton Rouge areas, having been denied their customary coastal playgrounds due to Camille's destruction, sought new Gulf Coast territories. It was a four hour drive to Florida but this didn't stop the weekend migrations. Thus, it was important to the Diamondhead interests to press for the completion of the cloverleaf infrastructure in order to provide an in-and-out traffic interchange on I-10. Fortunately, because the property already had a roadway maintained by the County, the Diamondhead Interchange at I-10 and Gex Boulevard was expedited in 1972. "Paradise" came alive for the developers.



The interchange connecting Interstate 10 and Gex Boulevard was a vital necessity for the developers. And in 1972, Diamondhead was connected to the major east-west artery.

The development company went through several corporate name changes during the early stages. The D.E.A.R. company of 1969 became Diamondhead Properties, Inc. in 1970; then Diamondhead Corporation in 1972; and in 1980, the Purcell Company, Inc. was formed.

Holcomb Hector was named Project Manager from the inauguration of the sale and has remained associated throughout the history of Diamondhead. He is now Vice President of the Purcell Company, Inc. The project moved expeditiously into laying out streets and golf courses as well as completing the construction of the Community Center in 1970. On-going construction of the Airport, the Country Club and condominiums continued. [6]

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[5] *"Diamondhead, Diamondhead Corp. brochure, 1971, p. 4"*

[6] *"Interview with Holcomb Hector, March 3, 1995"*

The first lot sales were made in June of 1970. A small army of salesmen headed by Buzz Prince was commissioned to promote Diamondhead lot sales. They were all dressed alike with red blazers and white trousers as they stood ready to escort their prospects in a fleet of twenty white vehicles.

Articulated salesmen assembled in front of a fleet of white sales cars at the Sales Lodge which later was expanded to become the Community Center. From Left to Right: Mac McAtee, Buck Ladner, Dick Merrit, Joe Short, Billy Mc Donald, Hugh Moore, Audie Cox, Tim Leary, Gordy Erickson, Carl Kern, Joe Buccola, Cletis Babin, Bob Wade, Carson Rocket, Wendal Newton, Hicks, and Ken Breland.

"Regarded as the focal point of all the exciting things happening at DIAMONDHEAD, the million dollar country club stands, offering unparalleled prestige to those who become members. One immediately senses a feeling of excitement upon arriving at this dramatic complex, with its soaring polynesian roofs, accented with lush exotic gardens, glittering ponds and walls of glass and imported volcanic rock. This stunning club offers a selection of two sumptuous dining rooms both with high cathedral ceilings each featuring the finest of gourmet cuisine plus an intimate island atmosphere cocktail lounge, card lounge, banquet room facilities, and all of these luxurious features exclusively yours, as a member." [7]

Development and construction continued as the area was subdivided into streets, cul-de-sacs, drives, courts; with each being given a Polynesian name. Artificial lakes were dug. Condominium villas were built: the Molokai, the Kona, the Lanai and Lakeside.

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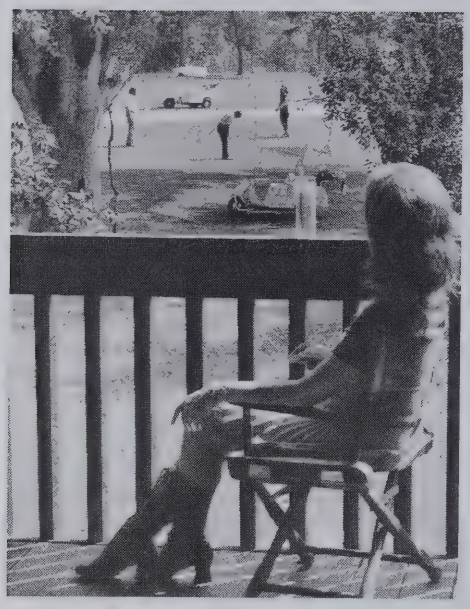
[7] *"Diamondhead, Diamondhead Corp. brochure, p.6"*



Diamondhead has its own private airstrip and sports two professonal golf courses.

"A large, beautifully appointed building, with an Hawaiian motif, was built near the main entrance, and the sales lodge (the Community Center) became the hub of the activity of selling lots." "On the south side of I-10 a beautiful Yacht Club was being built, and on the north side a luxurious Country Club, both in the same Diamondhead architectural style as the Sales Lodge. To one side and in front of the Country Club was the Fairway Villa Motel (which has since been moved to the commercial area, and is now known as the Diamondhead Inn)." [8]

Paradise In The Making

Lt. Governor Charles L. Sullivan welcomed the Diamondhead Corporation to Mississippi on Wednesday, June 30, 1971 in applauding William H. Maurer, President of the Corporation. Little Miss Laurie Hector tended the scissors for the ribbon cutting. Hundreds of guests were invited to participate in the opening of the Quarter million Club House and Golf Course. Mr. Maurer spoke on the progress of the planned community development stating that in just under one year, Six million dollars worth of property had already been sold. He declared further that the Community would have 15,000 homesites upon its completion.

Lt. Governor Sullivan extolled the Diamondhead Story as a complete one in that it was the first project undertaken by the Company before Alabama, Georgia, Florida, Oklahoma, North Carolina and Texas. He further proclaimed that Diamondhead was one of the only development communities to have access to both Salt water and fresh water. He also complimented the company's decision in reserving 640 acres for open spaces and recreational and community facilities. [9]

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[8] *"Welcome to Diamondhead" Newcomers Handout, A Brief History of Diamondhead, by M. Frances Mayfield, M.D., resident, 1987, p. 19.*

[9] *"Sea Coast Echo, July 8, 1971"*

Gladys Cox reminisced about the Top-Drawer treatment given to the guests. "Many blistered thumbs resulted as more than a thousand corks were popped from bottles of Champagne. The flow of the bubbly was poured hour after hour of hilarious fun making". "Thereafter, every weekend became a party. Bands were brought in from New Orleans every Friday and Saturday nights and for Sunday Jazz Brunches".

Diamondhead development dedication ceremonies were held on June 30, 1971. Cutting the ribbon was Little Miss Laurie Hector. She was accompanied by Lt. Governor Charles Sullivan and Bill Maurer, President of Diamondhead.

Gladys Cox, continued excitedly, "then there was the opening of the Yacht Club in 1975." She insists that she was at the Epicenter of shock waves which started that day at 11:00 a.m. and lasted continuously through the night into the following morning at 3:00 a.m. "It was fantastic! The club was jammed pack inside and out. People were squeezing through crowds in all manner of dress . . . they were in jeans, shorts, long slinky-things, and even furs." [10]

Chef Bill Vrazel prepared gourmet dishes that were out of this world. His extensive menu satisfied everyone's appetite. Because of his expertise and excellent lavishing style, he was appointed Manager of Food and Beverages for both the Country Club and, later, the Yacht Club.

The Yacht Club opened in 1975. It was Fantastic! Every weekend was a party. People packed the club to overflowing from inside to outside. Chef Bill Vrazel was Manager of Food and Beverages for both the Country Club and the Yacht Club.

Many folks originally bought into the Condos and later realized that they wanted to establish larger homesteads. One of these was Gertrude Waddington who in 1973 was the first Condo owner in

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[10] *" Interview with Gladys Cox, January 6, 1995 "*

Molokai Village. She is happy to have settled into a home with gardens to care for.

Mardi Gras had its first dry run in 1975 when five Golf Carts promenaded down Condo row with Wally and Alice Little leading in singing and dancing throughout Kona Villa. Paul Montjoy, then, Manager for the Purcell Corporation, enjoyed their festive rally so well that the following year he was suportive in bringing about the Krewe of Diamondhead.

Diamondhead had its first taste of Mardi Gras in 1975 when five golf carts promenaded down Condo Row with Wally and Alice Little leading in singing and dancing throughout Kona Villa.

Diamondhead became Mississippi Gulf Coast's finest community in broadcasting a brand new way to enjoy good living.

The Early Pilgrims

The first residential folks were Georgette Hall and her husband Norman. Georgette is most well known for her works; *The Sicilian* and *The House on Rampart Street.*

The Hall Family

In the beginning, streets were sparse and street lighting was just as scarce. The first recorded land sale was in July 1970. Slowly, home construction commenced. The first week-end home completed for move-in was by Norman and Georgette Hall on Aila Street. In addition to being a professional educator, Georgette is a well known author. Two of her famous writings are "*The Sicilian*" and "*The House on Rampart Street*". [11]

The Hoppert Family

Soon afterwards in 1972, Darwin and Mary Hoppert moved into their home on Golf Club Drive becoming the first full time residents. They not only made history by being the first dwellers, but observed first hand, the historic developments of Diamondhead's growth and expansion in realizing the dreams and aspirations of the developers. Mary is quick to attest her positive feelings for her community. She watched some of the condominiums being built. With unrestricted zeal, Mary exclaimed, "We took the pictures of the prefabricated Condo units arriving by barge from Mobile, up the Bay to be unloaded at our feet." "The construction crews and cranes simply stacked up the units and made Lanai Village", she continued. She described that it was lonely and quiet for quite sometime. The butterfly exit to I-10 was not

[11] *"Interview with Georgette Hall, February 21, 1995"*

started and the only way to get in and out was by way of the DeLisle road. "There was no grocery or gas station so most shopping trips and mail pick-up were made to Pass Christian", she expounded. The inconvenience lasted a long time because the development was not moving as predicted. The country club at night would only have one or two couples for dinner. Mary and one other lady were the only two resident members to start the Diamondhead Women's Golf Association. They were delighted when a number of ladies from Pass Christian accepted their invitation to join their Association. [12]

The Criss Family

Richard and Virginia Criss moved into their home during 1978 with their three children. Mr. Criss stated, "I commuted to New Orleans during the week and joined the Volunteer Fire Department". "We started the first commercial store in Diamondhead which is the Hinkey Dinkey and is now run by my son Rick", continued Mr. Criss. "By the way, my son Rick had the first wedding in Diamondhead in the Baptist Church when services were being held in a Trailer House", he reminisced. His reply to a question of sentiment on Diamondhead was in effect, "it's getting too big and sometimes talk about moving." [13]

The first commercial store to open in Diamondhead was the Hinkey Dinkey, owned by Richard and Virginia Criss. Today, the store is operated by their son Rick.

During this early period, Diamondhead had clearly become over-developed in terms of the number of lots available, which approximated 15,000 potential lots. It is considered the largest development to come onto the market with so many lots available at once. In time, "*Murphy's Law*" took effect as supply and demand drove the purchase prices downward.

The Gatepone Family

Jo Gatepone revels in recounting that she would get oodles of promotional telephone calls offering her a $25 certificate if she would just take a trip to Diamondhead to see the land offerings. She and her husband, during their first trip, fell in love with the area and bought their first lot in '72. Almost immediately, they bought and moved a three bedroom trailer onto the area called Holiday Village. Every week end she would exclaim to her husband, "Look!, another house is being built." Finally, in 1978, they built their present home near one of the four swimming pools. Her husband would cut the grass for the whole block to make it nice to have their grandchildren over for a picnic by the pool. With excitement, she exclaimed, "Those were great

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[12] *"Interview with Mary Hoppert, February 6, 1995"*

[13] *" Interview with Richard Criss, Sr., March 2, 1995 "*

Many of the early pioneers first bought lots or condos and later upgraded to residential homes.

days! Everyone knew each other and there was always a helping hand." "And one time while driving around with my grandchildren I got lost" "To make matters worse, I drove on top of a man-hole drain and my car wouldn't move." "I was reaching a point of panic because the kids were getting excited." "Just as I got out to examine, I saw a car down the road and I jumped up and down waving my arms." "It was Paul Montjoy, . . . he really saved my life that day," she related. [14]

The Bull Family

Gloria and Ira Bull bought their first lot in 1971. They enjoyed the area so much that every weekend they would stay at a motel in Waveland and drive up to tell their vacant lot "*hello*". This ceremony was then followed with a round of golf. They eventually bought a Studio Condo in Molokai in '72 and switched to a three bedroom condo at Kona Village in '74. Gloria recounted that it was terrible when it rained. "They use to keep a grader on the road to scrape the red clay off the road so the cars wouldn't get stuck." "We would get back to New Orleans and my husband would have to pull out the hose, raise up the hood, and wash down everything inside and out before that red clay would dry on our car," she exclaimed. "We watched them build the Yacht Club and every week-end the barges would land back where Tennis World is now, and big equipment would load trucks with the pre-fab sections for the Condos being built", she continued. [15]

The Hourin Family

James and Patty Hourin bought their first lot in '73 and took on a Condo the following year. They didn't wait long to demonstrate their desire to move in full time which occurred in 1977. "Oh, the big Yellow School Bus was our first major project. We bought it used and drove it 'til it fell apart in '79. All the parents who had children had to join the Parents School Bus Association in order to bus-out the kids," related Patty. "On week-ends we would all sell Hot Dogs and Hamburgers at the Riding Stables. Our sons really enjoyed the Summer Day Camps headed by the Youth Director, Ginger. My youngest, Scott, is now in the Marines, and the older two, Bill and Michael are in New Orleans," she continued. "We were also kept busy with baby showers, the first Diamondhead birth was Hunter Gamewell, but the young family moved away," stated Patty. [16]

All parents joined the Parents School Bus Association in order to transport kids in the Little Ole Yella School Bus.

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[14] *"Interview with Jo Gatepone, March 18, 1995"*

[15] *"Interview with Gloria Bull, April 12, 1995"*

[16] *"Interview with Patty Hourin, June 1, 1995"*

The Bourg Family

Hilda and Jerry transferred to Mississippi with the Naval Oceanographic's office move to the Stennis Space Center. They immediately bought their present home and lived in a condo for a few months until they refurbished their home to their fancy. Hilda was and still is an active one. Her son was the second youngest child in the new community and attended her bridge parties, as well as tagging along as she helped develop the Ladies Tennis Association or as she participated in taking the first Census for Diamondhead. She became the first woman president of the Community Association in 1982 and was nominated Queen of the Krewe of Diamondhead in 1983.

Hilda excitedly explains, "In the early days everybody stuck together and helped each other because everybody knew each other". "Watching Diamondhead grow has been an adventure," she continued. "We did many family things that were fun." "At the Tennis Club one day we were talking about the armadillos that were scooting about at night and digging holes in our lawns. The Tennis Pro suggested that we catch the awful things for medical research purposes, so we formed an *Armadillo Posse*" "All the neighbors and all the Diamondhead employees went out that night criss-crossing all the streets and chatting with each other on CB units. We had an hilarious time!" "But as you would have it, we didn't see one armadillo that night," she confessed. "Then, too, we used to have wonderful Christmas parties at the Country Club and Paul Milam would play Santa Clause and the kids really enjoyed Mr. Paul," Hilda continued. "We and the Maggios put on the last New Years Eve party where everyone in Diamondhead was invited. Several hundred people showed up, but that was it, we couldn't handle it anymore," she lamented.

Hilda Bourq became the first woman president of the Diamondhead Community Association. She was elected president in 1982.

Hilda's interests also pervaded civic responsibility. She co-authored a manuscript entitled "Tenure Study of the Hancock School System" and authored the "Hospitality City" for the Hancock Chamber of Commerce.

Golfing was an attraction to many who decided to buy in Diamondhead. Many of the first migration are still reserving thier Tee times.

"My husband, Jerry was with the Volunteer Fire Department. He was home the night of the very first fire in Diamondhead. It was a round wooden house on Ahekolo," she added. [17]

The Salvatore Family

Joe Salvatore and his wife Joy originally hail from New Orleans. Joe is also well known as the First King of the Krewe of Diamondhead which started in 1976 just one year following the first Mardi Gras

[17] *"Interview with Hilda Bourq, April 20, 1995"*

Hail, King Kolepa, Hail King Joe Salvatore, the First King of Diamondhead Mardi Gras, the First and Only King of Golfing. All Hail the King!

celebration initiated by the Little's. Joe says, "Paul Montjoy called me at my office in New Orleans and told me that I was King and that all I needed to do was to get my costume and meet with Evelyn McPhail and Ronnie Kole." "I left my office to pick up an outfit from MGM Costumes on Melpomene Street in New Orleans, and they sold me the King's rigging from the Elvis Presley movie *Blue Hawaii.*" "I thought I was in high cotton!, but the Kings after me all started putting on expensive regalia." "But, I was the only one that looked like an authentic Island native, What-the-heck, Elvis Presley blessed my rigging", he commented.

During the early years he stayed at his Condo in Kona Village and every Tuesday he would drive in from New Orleans to review building plans for the Architectural committee. "I guess I've had something to do with about most of the homes in the development," he thoughtfully replied.

"A lot of people don't realize that when it rains heavy and if the tide is high, Diamondhead is actually an Island," Joe conjectured. He had supervised a work-crew in digging a drainage ditch along the Hancock-Harrison line. It was channeled from I-10 northward under Kapalama Street at the Kiln-DeLisle road. "We waited for the next good rain and went out to see the trench work. The water fall-off flowed into the ditch eliminating any further flooding in that section. We walked the whole length of the drainage ditch to verify that the water flowed north and then turned west and finally drained into Rotten Bayou emptying into the Bay of St. Louis. The rain water and even flood waters from south of I-10 actually makes a full circle around Diamondhead back to the Bay. Diamondhead is on such high ground that the residents are never aware of this phenomenon", extolled Joe. "This may be the only place in the World that such a water-flow and drainage circles in a counter clock-wise manner," Joe continued. [18]

The Little Family

Alice and Wallace may not be the oldest couple in Diamondhead but they are the oldest live wires around. Alice claims to be only 83 and just celebrated her birthday, and the couple's sixtieth wedding anniversary, with their children, grandchildren and some great-grandchildren thrown in for luck. The Little's moved into Diamondhead in 1972. She said that she was a frustrated writer and that Evelyn McPhail encouraged her to start writing a column about Condo Living. Evelyn had liked it so well that Alice was promoted to write a social column for the whole community. She adapted her

[18] *"Interview with Joe Salvatore, April 21, 1995"*

writings to follow the format of Tommy Griffin's column in New Orleans.

"I even produced the "Diamondhead Cook" which netted $12,000.00 for the benefit of the Fire Department. So many of us worked so hard for the community to make it what it is today. It's unfortunate that the new people who come in just to play golf and things missed out on the many progressive fun things we use to do." ". . . And, I can tell you for a fact, we have the very best Doctors just right here in Diamondhead," Alice asserted. Alice Little was proclaimed "*Most Outstanding Citizen*" of Diamondhead in 1990. She was the first recipient to be presented this annual award. [19]

Alice Little was the first recipient of the Most Outstanding Citizen award. Recognition was duly given for her many exceptional undertakings to the benefit of Diamondhead. Cliff Couture made the award presentation in 1990.

The Pflugfelder Family

Arriving in June of '73 from Metairie, Bob and Marge had taken a condo which in July of '74 was outgrown as they moved into their home. "I-10 didn't go anywhere, we were in complete isolation," remarked Marge. "To go shopping and to get in and out we used to take the Kiln-DeLisle Road, the Borden Milkman use to deliver milk and I would take out my map to show him how to get to new customers," she continued. "On Friday nights, Paul Montjoy would call us together for progress reports on what was happening. I co-authored a Newsletter called the *Diamondhead Extra*. My husband, Bob, finally got tired of subsidizing the cost on it because there weren't enough businesses around to pay for advertizing," she added. "As pioneers, a lot of the quality housing that we have today in Diamondhead is because we got together and formed the *Diamondhead Community Association*. Bob was the first President and led the fight against some investors who wanted to build a lot of cheap homes in the area. This would have devalued our property and would have changed the original promotions for this to be a Paradise," continued Marge.

"Everybody helped each other as we struggled with the pangs of growth. We started the Diamondhead Social Club in 1973 and surveyed everyone's interests and hobbies. This is how a lot of the other organizations had their start. We use to get together for lunch and come up with ideas. We took quilting lessons and that's how the Sew & Sew club got started," explained Marge.

The Nolan Family

Dick and Betsy Nolan bought the former Project Office and turned it into their family abode. They too were part of the Yellow

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[19] *"Interview with Alice Little, June 1, 1995"*

Bus routine because of their two boys. Since there were only ten youngsters in the Community at that time, the parents became quite close in comraderie, as well as the kids. They formed a Little League which had to include girls as well, in addition to the older boys who were restricted from batting or pitching. "It took 3 years of baseball before the young boys got the hang of it to win," remembered Betsy. We use to ride horses all over Diamondhead. In fact we continued riding just up until four years ago. I remember the day we met Carl Adam, the owner of Hair Works. My horse's bridle broke just outside the Salon and Carl fixed it. Ever since, all of us have been going to him for our hair," she remarked. [20]

It took 3 years playing baseball before our boys got the hang of it to win!

The First Underwood Family

George and Jinkey moved into Diamondhead in 1977. George had made many trips to Diamondhead using Kent Boyd's boat for marketing purposes. Buying a home in New Orleans for his Memphis based family was out of the question. However, Diamondhead was exactly what the young parents of three children wanted. First landing into a Condo, they built their home the following year. "Everybody knew everybody! The Purcell Corporation put on many promotional parties and we went to all of them for the fun and because it was good for George to also promote business contacts. Every Friday night at the Yacht Club was party night. The Luau's were mystically wonderful. And Diamondhead was a marvelous and safe place for our children. They loved it so much that one of our sons has come back to live here." [21]

Second and Third Generation Underwood Family

David and Lauren Underwood decided to return to Paradise. Although having to commute to New Orleans, David wants to give his two children, who were born in Diamondhead, the same opportunities he was afforded during his childhood. He feels the sacrifice of commuting is worth it. He had grown up with all of his parent's friends who have remained in the community. "It's good to have so many of the old friends around," he remarked. "But, Diamondhead had much less population when I was a kid. We use to take our mo-peds and cut on down the roadways. There were mo-peds all over because they use to rent them at the old Motel.

Diamondhead was a marvelous and safe place for our children and the Luau's were wonderful with fun. The younger Underwoods want to give their children the same opportunities.

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[20] *"Interview with Betsy Nolan, June 1,1995"*

[21] *"Interview with Jinky Underwood, June 1, 1995"*

There weren't too many cars on the roads at that time so we formed our own *Hell's Angels'* group." [22]

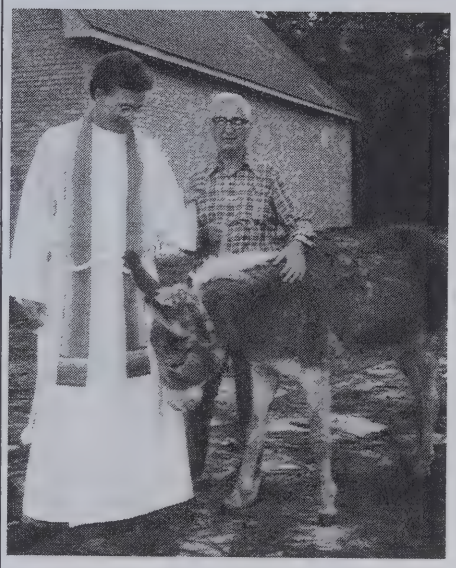
The Cassis Family

George Cassis hails from England. As a proclaimed nomad, by way of many journeys with his archaeologist father, George still pursues frequent trips throughout the world. His encounter with Diamondhead was first discovered from his Branch Office in Baton Rouge. He and his wife, Mary, elected to retreat to this Paradise in 1980.

George retells a story of his first social functions attended at the Yacht Club and the Country Club. Invariably he was asked. "Do you Golf?", *No!* "Do you Boat?" *No!* "Do you play Bridge?", *No!* " . . Well, What Do you Do?"

George Cassis is known for his contributions and active participation which warranted the Diamondhead Community Association presenting him with the "Outstanding Citizen of Diamondhead" award. His contributions to the St. Thomas' Episcopal Church and Diamondhead Academy signal his meaningful dedication. He also serves on the Board of Directors of the POA. As a private developer he owns the 8 1/2 acre tract known as Shepherd Square. Mary Cassis wanted a covered corral for her horse. In looking for a one acre location along the Kiln-DeLisle Road, none were readily available, so they purchased a 150 acre farm, built a covered corral for her horse, bought 50 head of cattle, and George laid claim to his pet for all occasions, Honkey the Donkey! Thirty acres of the farm is currently being used by the *Gaits to Success Therapeutic Equestrian Center*, a non-profit organization that uses equestrian facilitated activities to physically and educationally rehabilitate children with disabilities. [23]

Let's ask again, "*Well, George, What Do you Do?*"



Reverend Meridith J. Spencer tamed the spirit of *Honkey the Donkey* as Mr. George Cassis controls the reigns in celebration of the *Blessing of the Animals Day* in October 1985 at St. Thomas Episcopal Church.

Lou Lamendola

The Lamendolas arrived from Shreveport in '78 with the full intention of benefitting from the social and recreational activities flowing from the cornucopia of Paradise. Not wishing to stay in retirement, in 1981 they opened a Ladies' apparel store in the Bali MiniMall. Unfortunately, Lou lost her husband just a few months after opening the shop. She became convinced that with courage and a willful heart, she was going to remain in her new home rather than

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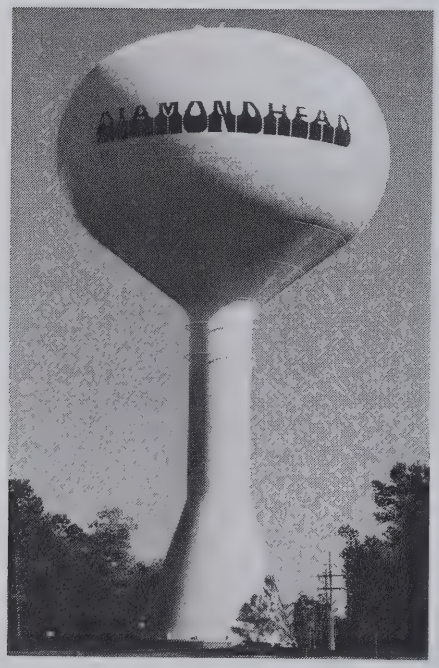
[22] *"Interview with David Underwood, June 3, 1995."*

[23] *"Interview with E. George Cassis, June 2, 1995"*

Lou Lamendola and Betty Cutler talk over new fashions.



return to North Louisiana. With determination, *LL Ltd.* remained open and has kept Lou quite busy. She also subscribed to various memberships in civic organizations and has been involved in many Community functions. Lou had her crown and glory this year in becoming Queen of the Krewe of Diamondhead for 1995. [24]

Shirl Templet

Another activist from the early years, Shirl Templet contributed to the growing colony in many ways. One of which was authoring a society column for the Sea Coast Echo newspaper. In reading her commentaries of lunches, parties, gatherings and garden and fashion shows, it was easy to see that just about every notable from New Orleans, Slidel, Hammond, and Baton Rouge were joining in the fun at Diamondhead. Many who first attended as guests of these functions sooner or later purchased condos or at least bought a lot in proving their interest in Diamondhead's future. [25]

Constable Leo Ladner

Leo is one of the two constables for Hancock County. He represents the Diamondhead area and knows every bit of it since he was but a snip of a kid. Hogs and cows roamed the pasture lands heavily laden with yellow pine that raised their tops upwards of a hundred feet. Leo's goat farm can be found just off Kapalama Drive. Near the center is a pond which not only quenches the goats' thirst, but is salted with perch, cat, and brim. Some of the catch easily weigh in at 12 pounds. At the gate in front of his stretch is planted a parking meter which fascinates the huge hog which lays by it.

"The Gex folks bought up all the property in the bottom half and the Faye people owned the top half. High Point Condos is the boundary break between the two former properties. The former Gex property was called Hickory Point and the former Faye property was called the Widowhill. Frank Ladner's homestead was where the Molokai Condos are located. The Joe Moran house was where the Days Inn is now." Leo pointed out where the 28 foot dug well was located. He related that he was always called to pull out a stray hog or calve that fell into the well. It was located at the present Diamondhead Water Tower Circle. At Rotten Bayou on the banks of Devil's Elbow was the favorite fishing spot for most folks around."

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[24] *"Interview with Lou Lamendola, June 1, 1995"*

[25] *"The Historic POA Collection."*

"At the site of the former Horse Stables was a big saw mill and the house where Long John Ladner stayed. He was the overseer for John Wheat's Mill and he tended the ox team that pulled in the logs. When the Diamondhead Corporation built the stables they had a big mound of wood shavings from which to spread around the corral and in the stalls."

Leo pointed out once more, "Right there was the best 'whiskey still' in the area. It produced thousands of gallons of *Rotten Bayou Dew* or *white-lightnin'* as you know it", he extolled. The site was just off the Bayou where an artesian well still flows. However, the well, which is now on private property, has been diverted to the homeowner's plumbing needs. [26]

The Paradise Builders

Membership in Diamondhead can only be obtained through property ownership. Diamondhead offers a wide range of properties including a choice of condominiums, townhomes, cluster cottages, private homes or vacant lots.

For visitors, vacationers or even temporary weekenders who wish just to seek a get-a-way, they will find that Diamondhead offers short term rental programs with one, two or three bedroom townhomes or condominiums. Guests of these accommodations are treated as guest-members of Diamondhead with access to all amenities. Special promotional programs are also offered with golf or tennis packages.

The homes at Diamondhead are as varied as is its people. They range from quiet, unpretentious homes to elegantly emblazoned Show Places.

By 1977, 361 condo units had been sold. The population base of the residential community was ever increasing. In 1978 new development villages were being constructed, such as "Devil's Elbow" consisting of 13 homes and "The Oaks", a residential development of 100 homes. "Devil's Elbow" is located on beautiful Bayou Baneeshewah (Rotten Bayou). It has lovely 3 and 4 bedroom homes in either Acadian style (raised off the ground) or Creole style (ground level). They are adorned with walkways and piers surrounded by huge moss-hung oaks which shade the area and cast reflections upon the waters of Bayou Baneeshewah.

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[26] *"Interview with Constable Leo Ladner, May 23, 1995"*

"The Oaks" introduced the concept of cluster homes set apart in a seclusive wooded area. Each cluster features seven homes of two or three bedroom styles which are built on a quiet, land-scaped, cul-de-sac sharing common grounds and play areas including a private park. As a separate community concept within Diamondhead, the builders even named the streets with rugged wilderness names.

Diamondhead consists of two former areas which were known as Hickory Point and Widowhill. Devil's Elbow was the favorite fishing spot for earlier settlers.

Those having a preference for the serenity of waterside, can enjoy the larger Harbor House Townhouses located along the waterway. With a Cape Cod design, these townhomes are ideally located adjacent to the Yacht Club and Marina. From the Harbor House, boaters have direct access to the Gulf of Mexico through the Bay of St. Louis.

For families wishing a permanent settlement, Diamondhead Realty is available with pre-approved housing plans or will build from any architectural designs submitted to and approved by the Architectural Committee of the Property Owners Association. A number of independent contractors have also added to the building boom. The many improvements of new construction adds to and maintains the prosperity of the community, thereby pressing home values and property equity into upward growth.

The Purcell Corporation continues expansion in creating new neighborhoods and attracting new friends and partners in the Valhalla of the Coast. Highpoint Townhomes are located across from the Country Club and Golf Pro Shop. This complex offers poolside views with one or two bedroom floor plans. As a small community of and by itself, it is layered on rolling hills located on the highest point of elevation, not only in Diamondhead, but throughout the entire Gulf Coast.

The rolling hills were subdivided into streets and cul-de-sacs, all having been graced with exotic Polynesian names.

A most recent development by the Purcell Corporation is Glen Eagle. This upscale subdivision accents the residential area as a golfing community surrounded by nine holes of golf and centered by forty acres of wooded area. Glen Eagle consists of 189 lots averaging 100 foot frontage thereby insuring adequate spacing between adjoining homes. Glen Eagle is located in the heart of the Diamondhead Resort in an area of gently rolling hills covered with towering pines and majestic oaks. Its winding roads and cul-de-sacs differ in that its streets are named after top golfing resorts throughout the World, such as Cherryhill, Crooked Stick, Doral, Oakmont and Turnberry.

Commercial development has also kept pace with housing development. Emphasis was placed on good planning and an abidance to regulations and restrictions. This has resulted in some conformity for facilities providing retail, financial, medical, and other services which has resulted in keeping them apart from residential units. This

concept adheres to good security maintenance as well as traffic monitoring access.

One of the developers of commercial properties is John Ritten, Sr., hailing originally from Chicago. He is most proud of the Diamondhead community growth. Moreover, he pridefully recounts his many years on the Gulf Coast and in particular his role in the future of Diamondhead. As the owner and developer of the Indian Hill commercial business park, he is adamant about the aesthetic posture that the construction design will pursue. He is also the top executive with Coast Delta Realty, Inc. and Rex Land, Inc. The Rex Land Company is in the process of developing an upscale business park with restrictive covenants and controlled architecture. [27]

Another Commercial Developer is George Cassis who has carved out a section of acreage east of the Shopping Plaza. The Medical Business Park complex is called Shepherd Square. It consists of 8 1/2 acres waiting to be complimented by adding a Medical Clinic. At present it accommodates Rehab Associates as a major medical provider. Mr. Cassis is determined to complete the development with a participating Medical Center which would allow the over-riding profits to be dedicated to the Diamondhead Academy of which he is School Board President. [28]

Jim English commenced his initial activity in Diamondhead by prewiring many of the private homes which were under construction during the early 70s. When he first entered the Cable Television business, he opened the franchise covering West Harrison County, while in foreseeing the expansion which the Diamondhead community was yet to undergo, in the late 80s, English applied for another franchise covering the new territory.

All commercial and residential developers have been kept seriously busy since 1990.

Pursuing increased interest in Diamondhead, he purchased the Nautilus Spa and building where in 1990, he moved the Diamondhead Cable operations team. Jim English hails from Williamsport, Pennsylvania and is bolstered by his wife, two daughters and four sons. Two of the sons are currently work with him.

Not one to remain still, English launched an extensive development within the Westside commercial district. During 1995, he opened Park Ten Lanes which is a state-of-the-art Bowling facility and Civic, Community and Entertainment Center. At all times, Jim keeps himself involved with new projects and contemplates a continual growth of the Diamondhead Westside. [29]

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[27] *"Interview with Jon Ritten, Coast Delta Realty, April 10, 1995."*

[28] *"Interview with E. George Cassis, June 2, 1995"*

[29] *"Interview with Jim English, November, 1995."*

Another local residential developer, Larry Minnaert, has been a resident and builder in Diamondhead since 1984. One of his undertakings, the Kapalama Cove Patio Homes, is located in the Northeastern corner of Diamondhead off Kapalama Drive. The Private Village will consist of 45 units, sits on 8.2 acres and will have its own independent Property Owners Association and Manager when completed, as do all the other private villages in Diamondhead. [30]

As a result of these independent builders and developers who have invested much of their own resources and energies by realizing the dream of Paradise, along with the first pioneer developers, many more newcomers have become attracted to Diamondhead. In a talk given before the Business and Professional Organization, Hancock County Tax Assessor George Heitzmann announced that Diamondhead had benefitted the County Tax Roles by $65,000 for the 1995 tax year. He further declared that assessments for 30 newly completed homesites in the new subdivision were not included in that amount. He stated that in 1973, the area composed of Diamondhead had only produced $3,360 in annual tax benefits with an original assessment of $48,000.

Luau parties were some of the most enjoyed events at the Yacht Club. Every Friday was party night as sales promotions invited many folks, particularly from out of town.

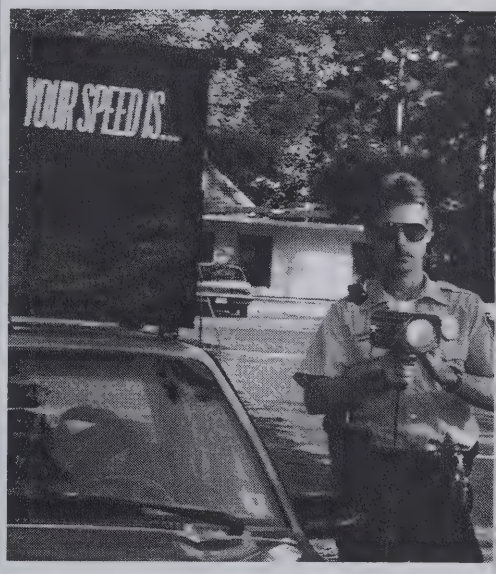
[30] *"Interview with Larry Minnaert, May 4, 1995"*

Community Support Services

With growth and the aggressive support by civic minded leaders, many amenities and services have inured to the benefit of the Diamondhead community. Some services are new by spontaneity while others have been expanded are modified to best respond to Diamondhead citizenry needs and comfort. The POA Board of Directors established an annual budget for the construction, renovation and maintenance priorities for the forthcoming year to protect and enhance the many facilities and community assets.

- **The Diamondhead Security Services Division** prides itself on its security performance. A private security force is contracted for on a 24-hour basis monitoring activity throughout the community as well as traffic at the two entrances. Armed men patrol the entire community by car while providing security as well as information at the front gate. The unique layout of Diamondhead, offering one way in and one way out, as well as an involved community and an aggressive patrolling policy of its security force results in superior crime control with minimal violations.

During the formative years of the 70's, security was maintained by the Diamondhead Corporation and later transferred to private services with Fred Curet Private Security and then to Schultz and



Head of the Diamondhead Security Force is Charles LaFontaine, demonstrating a Speed control device to his men.

Associates of Gulfport. Because the population was somewhat limited, much of the early security was directed to protection of the many building projects being raised throughout the ten mile community. On February 4 of 1980 the contract was awarded to the current firm, Gulf Coast Security Services, Inc. Its owner, Earl "Buck" Ladner, is very enthusiastic, in proudly touting the *No Crime* statistics for the community. He is the first to state that one of the major factors is that his patrolmen can pull over any suspicious automobile and escort them out of the ninety miles of private roadway. "No other community this size can do that", Buck exclaimed. "In a Municipality, I couldn't stop anyone until after they break a law," he continued. "We had seven patrolmen in 1980 and now we have fourteen full-time personnel attached to the Diamondhead community", Buck stated. [1]

Diamondhead maintains the lowest crime incident rate by comparison to all communities along the Gulf Coast and signals as one of the safest environs in the Country.

In accordance with crime incident reporting on the Gulf Coast in 1994, Diamondhead by far, held the lowest incident rate. It held an account of one incident in 67 people as compared to 1 in 20 for the rest of the County. Gulfport and Biloxi averaged one in seven, therefore making a statement that Diamondhead is the safest area and perhaps one of the safest areas to live in to avoid crime as compared to anywhere in the United States. The Diamondhead Local Security Force is headed up by Charles LaFontaine.

This visual line up of protection vehicles was taken in 1991. Several of the oldest units have been retired from service since then.

- **The Diamondhead Fire and Rescue Emergency Services** rates as one of the best in Mississippi, which results in very reasonable homeowners insurance premiums. Diamondhead with state of the art equipment, is serviced by the most modern and best-equipped 24-hour fire department in Hancock County. Since its inception, it has grown to include an efficient, full-time professional fire fighter force with thoroughly trained men including all modern aspects of fire-fighting.

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[1] *"Interview with "Buck" Ladner, May 23, 1995"*

In its support system, all streets are served by a six inch minimum water line to the fire hydrants backed up with an elevated water storage of half a million gallons of water. The Fire Department was originally devised as the legal Fire and Waste Collection District as authorized by the State of Mississippi. It is funded by a 4 mil County tax and a special fire-fee on all residences and condominiums. This fee is reported with the waste collection fees as included on monthly water utility billing statements.

Fire Chief Dennis Westbrook joined the department in 1985 bringing many years experience. With three shifts of two full-time paid fire-fighters Diamondhead remains one of the best fire departments in the State of Mississippi. The Diamondhead Fire Department boasts a unique status within the State's 841 fire departments. Diamondhead is the only community fire district to successfully earn a class 6 rating. This greatly reduces the cost of insurance premiums paid by residents in addition to assuring a vital and real presence of protection and support.

Chief Westbrook expressed that most call incidents to the Fire Station involve accidents such as falls or breathing induced ailments.

The year 1995 introduces the 911 System to Diamondhead residents which according to Chief Westbrook will provide improved response by not only the Fire Department but also by Ambulatory and Security support systems. "Approximately 87% of our calls are in response to Medical support. Because we are not only a recreation resort, but also a retirement community, we respond to many accidents due to falls, in addition to breathing induced ailments, as well as heart problems", exclaimed the Chief.

"The Street Grid System was already in place when I came here. It has been extremely beneficial in response to emergency calls. A lot of people get upset with the house numbering system and in pronouncing street names, but all they need to tell us is the first two numbers of their house number and we can pin point them on the grid map. Of course we still have to know the full street number and name to make contact. However, it eliminates mistakes in finding them and in an emergency, particularly of a medical nature, time is of the essence. The Grid System is definitely of great value," reported Westbrook.

"We have a great team effort with our firemen. Fire Departments are more unique than any other security force because we are literally on duty 24 hours a day seven days a week. This is our home away from home. We actually live here!", reiterated Chief Westbrook. [2]

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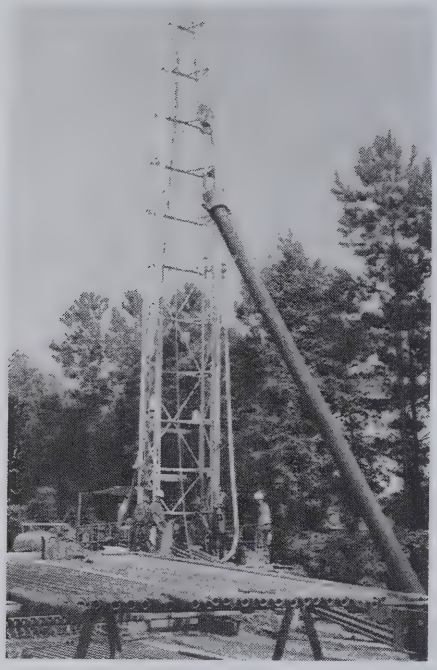
[2] *"Interview with Chief Westbrook, May 3, 1995"*



Diamondhead is serviced by three artesian wells which are drilled to 800 feet. Nearly 3000 gallons of water per minute can be pumped if required. The Pine Well above was drilled in 1993.

Commission Members

Edward Dabler, President
Thomas Parkin, Vice President
Norman Schuback, Secretary Treasurer
Patricia King, Member
Warren Swanson, Member

The Fire Department had its origination in 1973 with six volunteers headed by, Captain Ed Friloux, a retired, part-time, Fire Chief. The following year, the Hancock County Board of Supervisors created a Fire Commission in which, they appointed five Diamondhead residents. The Ladies Auxiliary and the Purcell Development Corporation raised funds to provide three full time fire-fighters, protective clothing, a rescue truck and a fire truck. Having established a source of dedicated tax revenues in 1978, resulted in the planning of the current Fire Station which was completed in 1980.

- **Diamondhead Water and Sewer District** The Diamondhead Water and Sewerage District was created in 1989 and is headed up by Tony Esau as its General Manager. He has 12 employees under his direction including office staff, meter readers, and maintenance personnel.

Tony is a big, barrel-chested man with thick arms. Dressed in jeans, a former Naval Commanding Officer, his last command was NORDA here on the Gulf Coast before his retirement three years ago. A resident of Diamondhead, he has taken on a new marine project with an authoritative and yet supportive demeanor to the 2500 homes and more than 300 condos and nearly a hundred businesses and offices receiving services.

Water is derived from three artesian wells which were drilled 800 feet to the *miocene aquifer*, which expands the whole width of Mississippi from the Coast to Hattiesburg. Nearly 3000 gallons of water per minute can be pumped from the 3 wells if required. The Tank, which residents can easily view when passing the Tower Circle, holds 500,000 gallons and supplies 100 miles of water piping in the network which reaches out to every home and condo as well as the nearly 100 businesses including restaurants and hotels. Service is also given to the support and recreation amenities, such as the Yacht Club, the Country Club, the Airport, the swimming pools and fountains which are also supplied with daily needs. Casino World was recently approved for services, but they will be required to pay all connection costs as well as any additional stress costs that may be imposed.

Even though the volunteer members are allowed monetary stipends for meeting attendance, they have elected not to take other than normal mileage expenses for the use of their automobiles. A member is appointed by the County Board of Supervisors with the requirement that they must be a legal resident or a current business owner in Diamondhead. [3]

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[3] *"Interview with Tony Esau, April 5, 1995"*

- **Diamondhead Waste Collection** is provided by the Fire And Waste District through a contract with Waste Management, Inc. Diamondhead achieved status in being the first community in providing door to door recycling. New improvements to combining beautification and sanitation are always being offered. Of particular note is the orderly container policy in that all residences have containers of same color and size.

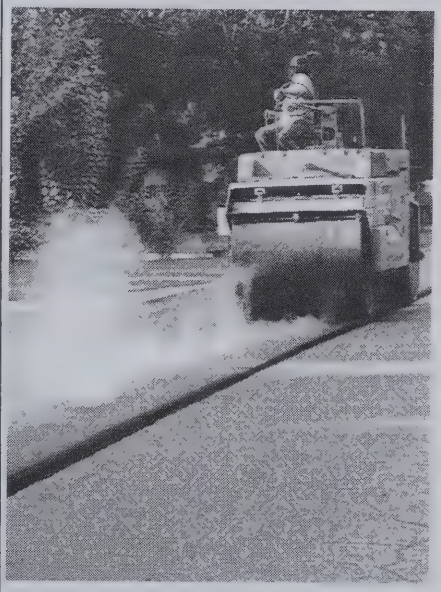
- **Diamondhead Electricity and Power** is provided by contract service with Coast Electric Power Association. Diamondhead is serviced by three main line feeds with new dedicated power line feeds in the planning stages thereby eliminating external interferences. An underground power source has been extended to the Water System in order to provide priority Water Service in the eventuality of power loss.

- **Diamondhead Streets and Drainage** system is the responsibility of the Diamondhead Property Owners Association which is funded by monthly lot assessments of $30. Ten employees are supervised by Andy Borja who maintains approximately 100 miles of roadways throughout Diamondhead. New road construction is also part of the activity. With continued development, drainage requirements necessitate additional culvert capacity to protect existing roadways and downstream housing. This department also provides grass cutting along the roads, the athletic fields, swimming pool areas, and the Interchange, as well as the grounds at the Airport, Marina and Yacht Club.

Median Beautification programs are encouraged when property owners wish to volunteer additional care of the medians fronting their properties. The Garden Club is assisted with additional care at the Atrium and all Pilgrimage routes. Tree trimming, new landscaping, seasonal plantings, and seeding for top quality turf are additional services performed. [4]

- **Diamondhead SPCA** A community service chartered independently of the POA. Frances Pike, her husband George, and a group of very dedicated ladies and men formed the Diamondhead SPCA in 1992. When they found that the demands of handling the many tasks were so meticulous, the volunteer team found it better to assign specific duties to designated members. A Cat team handles only cats since isolation, cooling and heating are of necessary concern. This,

Median Beautification programs are encouraged by the Diamondhead Streets and Drainage department. The Gardening personnel are quick in their support of the Garden Club.



The roadways throughout Diamondhead approximate 100 miles and new streets are always being blacktopped and graded.

[4] *"Interview with Andy Borja, June 6, 1995"*

therefore, actually entails harboring lost or abandoned felines in private homes. Approximately 300 cats are treated with tender loving care each year resulting in some volunteers having to give up their garages and even guest rooms as a hospice for their furry visitors.

Other volunteers deal strictly with the canine population. The Kennels are located at the Diamondhead Grounds Maintenance yard. Each dog when picked up is isolated and brought to a veterinarian for shots and heartworm treatment. Approximately 75 dogs a year are processed and held for placement at the shelter.

Even a Fund Raising program is necessary to administer to the costly treatment procedure. There are Vet's fees which require shots and medication as well as spaying and neutering of the animals. Maintenance and provisions for new kennels is an ongoing process. A big item is for food and miscellaneous medication. Advertising is also an essential item in placing the animals rather than to euthanize them.

The SPCA Team is headed by the Pikes, the Hopkins, the Keens and the Wise's who are supported by other volunteers in keeping stray animals from roaming the neighborhoods. Their time and sacrifices are due to a great love for animals.

Sharing and caring are key elements in the successful placement of the cats and dogs. Because Diamondhead has so many visitors to residences, Condos and to the Days Inn Motel, results in an interesting population of many full blooded pedigrees being found and sheltered. Animal placement is tendered throughout the entire Coastal area.

John Wise has been working on a system with Paul Montjoy to register domestic animals in Diamondhead. This will make it easier to return animals to their owners and ultimately reduce the load and also reduce costs to the SPCA. Warm praise must to be proffered to the many dedicated individuals and families who support the program. In particular, the Pikes, the Hopkins, the Keens and the Wise's who get full satisfaction and pleasure in being able to love so many affectionate companion creatures.

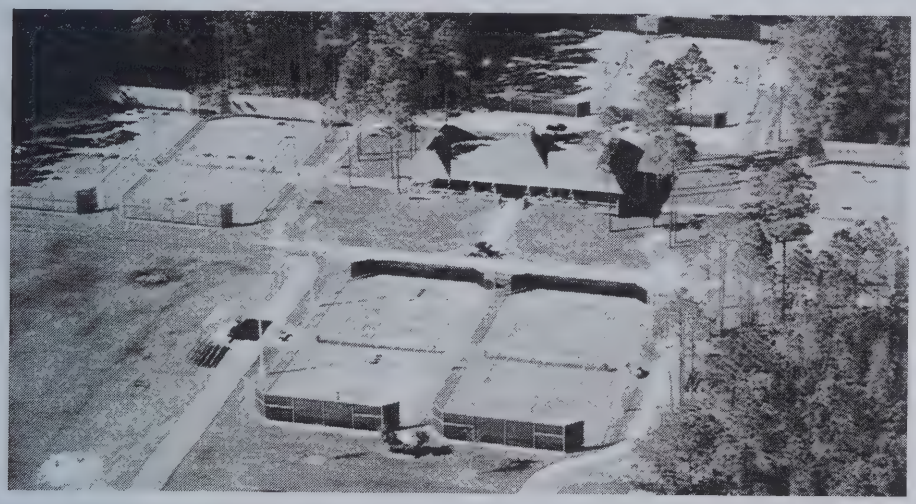
Sporting and Recreation

- **Diamondhead Golf Courses.** Diamondhead has two of the finest 18 hole championship golf courses in the Southeast. The facilities include practice areas as well as a fully staffed and well stocked pro shop. The *Pines* course, designed by Bill Atkins, was the first to be developed and meanders throughout a well-developed residential section of the community. The *Pines* plays to 6,832 yards

and is rated at 73.5. The *Cardinal* course offers a more challenging game in a more natural, wooded setting. It was designed by Earl Stone. The course presents a challenge to the most avid golfer. It is carefully planned with tree lined fairways and beautifully contoured greens. It plays to 6,730 yards and is rated 72.6. The Cardinal Golf Course opened its first nine holes in 1978 and the second Cardinal 9 was completed in 1979. All courses are backed up by a professional staff with a completely stocked golf shop. [5]

One of the first Golf Professionals engaged by Diamondhead was personable Johnny Pott who had been a fixture to the Gulf Coast most of his life. Among other top tourers, Pott defeated Jack Nicklaus at the Waco Turner Open in 1962. His string of victories included playing tournaments at Firestone and Pebble Beach.

- **Diamondhead's Tennis World** is one of the most active tennis facilities on the Gulf Coast embracing eight outdoor, lighted, Rubico courts. Team-play and lessons make Tennis World a complete tennis complex. The original Tennis Facility was made up of eight courts. The Full-service Pro-Shop opened in June of 1977 in a temporary trailer offering comfort and convenience as well as an array of clothing and notion selections. As the increased population of the past five years has affected all facilities, it was necessary to upgrade Tennis World also. It now includes an additional 1000 square feet of deck space as well as new and renovated lighting. This was made necessary as proved by the increase of tennis play by 300 percent and demonstrated by over 200 individuals participating. Mike Milliken, a nine year resident of Diamondhead, has been the Tennis Manager since 1993. "We've just about turned the Club around financially, we should be close to breaking even in a few months," exclaimed Mike.



Mike Milliken is busy supervising over six nationally sanctioned tournaments played each year, one of which is for the teen crowd. He brags about the Diamondhead tennis center being tops on the Gulf Coast attracting players from as far as Pascagoula and Baton Rouge on a regular attendance basis.

"We have 14 adult teams with 8 to 12 members to a team and the youngsters range from 4 years to 18 make up our youth teams," he declared. Mike and his assistant Coach, Connie Skrmetta, keep the place swinging seven days a week from 9 to 9. Approximately 40

[5] *"Diamondhead, Mississippi, p. 4 "*

percent of the participants are Diamondhead residents with interest growing. "We have one of the two finest tennis workout centers on the Coast. Some folks even come in on a regular basis from Pascagoula and Baton Rouge. They love it here!", he continued.

Six nationally sanctioned tournaments are played each year, five adult contests and one is a teen participation. These are well attended and are N.T.R.P regulated. "We have the most affordable club and we lure folks from all over," boasted Mike.

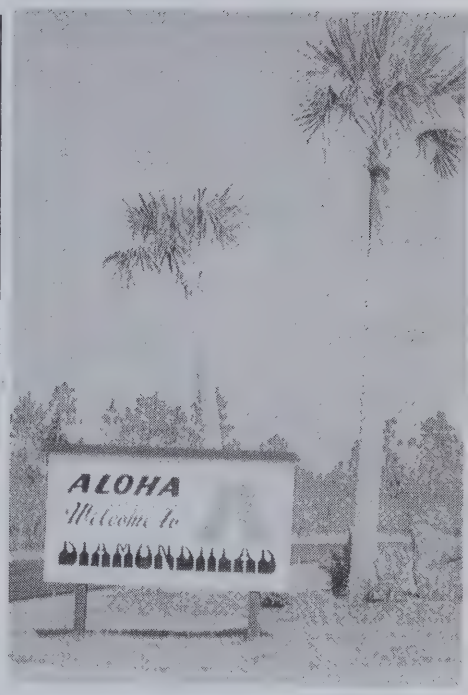
- **The Diamondhead Marina** offers a harbor for sailboats and power boats alike, under the care of the managing Harbor Master. It is accessable to the Mississippi Sound via Paradise Bayou, Indian River, and the Bay of St. Louis. Over the years the docking and harboring facilities have been increased. Currently there are 60 berths inhabited by 54 boats. The Marina facilitates mooring for boats of up to 55 feet in length. The boat launch accommodates trailers with boats brought in by new members and guests. Trailers are currently accommodated in the parking lot. Fueling services are available at the end of Pier 2, however, a new docking facility is planned adjacent to the Ship's Store.

Bob Calvey serves as Harbor Master since 1986 and also man's the Ship Store. Among the monthly regulars are the Fin and Feather Club and the Coast Guard Auxiliary headed by Frank Gasper.

- **The Ship's Store** at the Marina has been under lease contract with Bob Calvey since 1986. He also serves as the Harbor Master. The Ship's Store provides beer, soft drinks, snack foods, and boating necessities. It also serves as a meeting place for boaters and fishermen. Any Diamondhead member can rent the private room facility which handles up to 50 people. Larger Summer groups entertain out on the lawn with Seafood parties. The Ship's Store is open seven days a week from 8 a.m. until 6 p.m. Boat safety classes as well as Seamanship and navigation are offered by the Diamondhead Coast Guard Auxiliary, Flotilla #33 headed by Frank Gasper. Emergency assistance is also available when needed.

Bob keeps the marine radio channel "on" while maintaining an alert ear for any boater in trouble. "When on Hurricane Watch, by Seventy-two hours prior to an impending blow, all the boats are evacuated from the Marina." "All available members of the Boaters Association and the POA maintenance crew lend a hand in securing the Marina and its evacuation," related Bob. "When a hurricane is nearby, all that marsh grass is covered with waves moving inland. It's a sight to see," he pointed out. Bob keeps an alert eye towards the sky, he noted three mallards pistoling in from the South and smiled, "Come see where they landed!" Outside his front door in the nearby canal, were the trio of ducks puttering in the canal. The Harbor Master also checks the vessels to make sure they are tied down properly and locks the gates each evening.

Bob discovered Diamondhead as a result of a forced "Detour" off of his normal Highway 90 route along the coastal cities. "I came across this big sign that said *Welcome to Paradise!*, I had to stop and check it out", mused Bob. "I bought a lot, rented a condo, brought in my Mom who needed looking after and decided to retire here", he continued. "Now, here I am, and here I'll stay", Bob happily admitted. Harbor Master Bob Calvey speaks highly of the adept sportsmen who keep their boats in the Marina. One of them, Captain Mel Fox, owns the *Sea Fox* a 40 footer which has been a past trophy winner of the Gulfport Fishing Rodeo. [6]



Diamondhead main entrance at I-10 Intersection in November 1970.

• **The Diamondhead Yacht Club** is well suited to boaters and non-boaters alike. A first class restaurant and lounge overlooks the Bay of St. Louis providing a spectacular panorama as well as fine dining. The Yacht Club Restaurant is very popular, and offers a wide selection of local seafood favorites as well as traditional items. For those who want to "catch their own", the bayous, the Bay of St. Louis and the Gulf of Mexico offer excellent opportunities. The Mississippi Gulf Coast is world renowned for its shrimp, crabs, oysters, crawfish, speckled trout, as well as numerous other game fish.

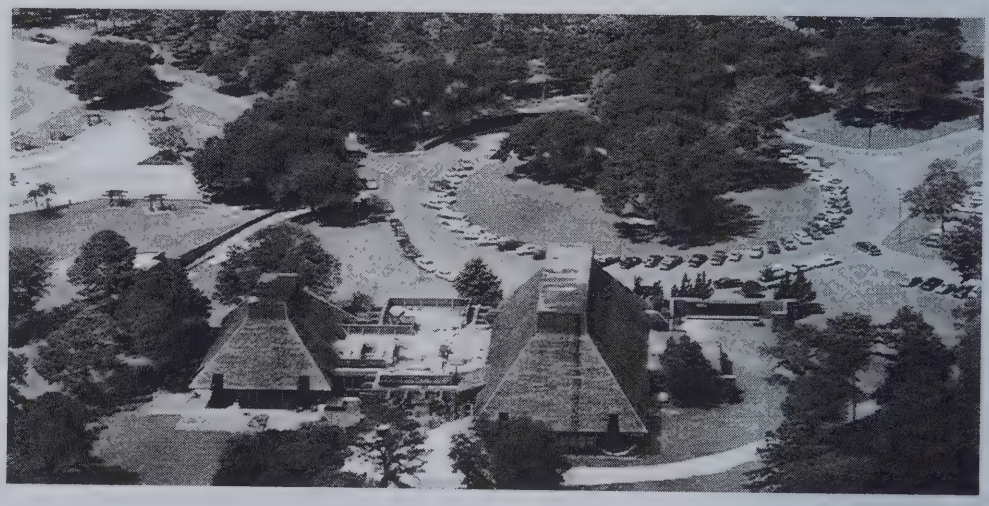
The Yacht Club features late afternoon and evening hours for specially prepared menu selections, Salad Bar, or from its Full Menu. Friday and Saturday evenings and Sunday lunch is always a fun filled outing serving up Chef specials, such as Lobster Thermidor or Newberg, Amberjack, Snapper, or Speckled Trout. with a Champagne Buffet. The open deck overlooking the Harbor is immensely enjoyed for its breezes all year round. Many folks just drop by the Bar for a few casual drinks overlooking the marina.

Yacht Club with Boat watchers singing and dancing on the open deck.

[6] *"Interview with Harbor Master Bob Calvey, May 23, 1995"*

Mary Mac Donald and John Housey are having a Ball!

• **The Original Diamondhead Country Club** prior to its burnin down on November 12, 1995, was unsurpassed for the realization of pleasures gained by the pioneers to the area. It offered a main Dining Room and a pastoral Terrace Room which overlooked the golf course. It had an intimate Fountain Room which accommodated small luncheon groups and there were several meeting rooms for seminars and conventions. Club manager, Brenda Graybeal, was always very supportive to every need including special or private functions. The Club entertained a full schedule of meetings and programs such as Bridge Groups and Monthly Club Dances with well-known local entertainment providing old time favorite dance tunes. Brenda catered to Diamondhead needs in many capacities, first as Paul Montjoy's secretary in 1973 and then as Manager of the Country Club. She was very proud of her Chef, Diana Sanchez, who had won many awards in culinary distinction. [7]



The Country Club hosted many Diamondhead weekly and monthly functions as well as being the fulcrum point for local and regional golfing packages and tournaments. The Weekly Karaoke nights and the monthly dances were favorites with members.

The Tiki Lounge was also supported by a long time employee, June Middleton, who had performed in many categories, such as Receptionist, Cashier, Waitress, front desk clerk at the old Motel, and then, as Bartender and co-manager of the Lounge. Fridays were special at the Tiki, both with the principals of the *Crew of Tiki* and the crowds that joined in the Terrace Room to dance and sing along with the *Karaoke*.

The *Grill* offered Golfers a place to meet and retreat to.

The former Country Club was also host to many local and regional golf tournaments, as well as business conferences. The old

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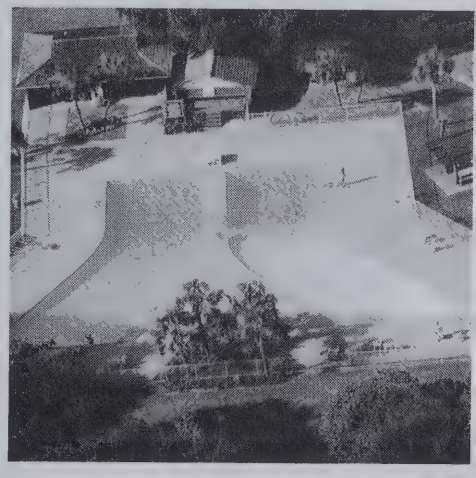
[7] *"Interview with Brenda Graybeal, June 15, 1995"*

Country Club was the fulcrum of activity for golfing packages and tournaments. Expedient focusing on the Gulf courses has resulted in ample revenues being generated. This effort redounds to the benefit of all Diamondhead residents in reduced costs for maintaining and servicing the whole community development.

- **The Diamondhead Community Center** is the hub for community activities. The large rotunda is used for many organizational functions including meetings, socials, and dances. Many church services and civic groups and private functions keep the facility well scheduled. The Garden Club, Square Dance Club, Bridge Club plus other groups and organizations too numerous to mention use the center on a weekly basis. The Center also houses the administrative team of the Property Owners Association. All accounting and record keeping as well as the overall management activities, services and directions are managed in the facility. It has served as the heart pulse of Diamondhead activity since its inception 25 years ago.

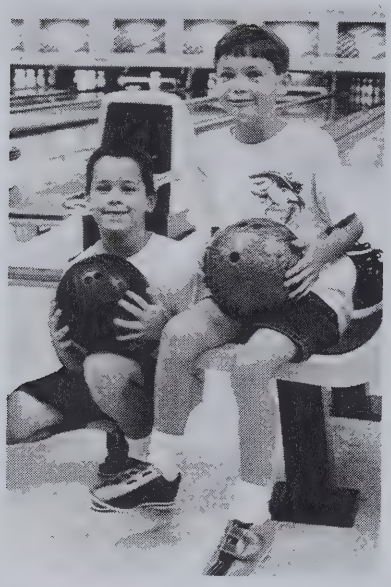
- **The Diamondhead Airport** offers a 3,800 foot lighted runway for private planes. Various services and tie-down spaces are available. This facility was constructed in 1972 and the hangar was built the following year. More than a few Diamondhead residents built homes on taxiways in order to have immediate access to their airplanes. In providing professional services, the Airport has been leased out as a means of maintaining the asset property and to provide a positive cash flow. Parker Rhett Aircraft Sales, Inc., became prime lessee and airport manager effective in 1991. At that time the POA resurfaced and striped the runway in addition to renovating the lighting system. Parker Rhett installed a new fuel service facility and provides aircraft maintenance and line service to members and guests.

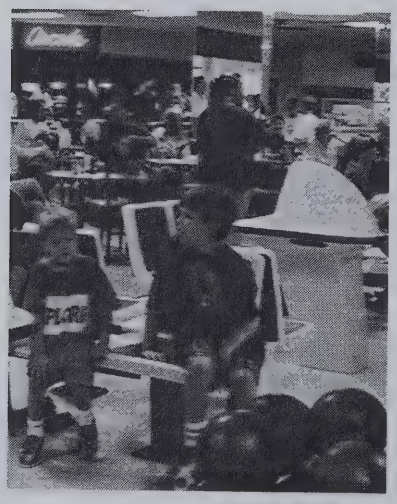


- **Parks and Pools:** Diamondhead maintains four large swimming pools and picnic areas strategically located throughout the community which are for use by property owners. These amenities compliment the neighborhood park complex to include Cabanas and Bar-B-Que grills as well as tennis courts, children's playgrounds and softball fields.

- **The Diamondhead Multi-purpose Athletic Field** is located at the East Recreation Center on Diamondhead Drive East. Besides being used for baseball, the removable outfield fencing can allow setting up for full size soccer or football fields.

The Diamondhead Youth Organization promotes all recreational sports and maintains twelve baseball teams approximating 150 youngsters.





- **Park Ten Lanes** -- One of the newest businesses of 1995 is an up-scale, hi-tech, family-oriented entertainment and recreation center. It is a well planned multifarious coliseum designed for every member of the family or for single individuals of any age. A supervised Nursery is provided for infants, pre-toddlers, and toddlers. An Activity Center comprising an indoor playground for children ages 3 to 10 is filled with action fun such as crawl tubes, etc. A Video Arcade is adjoining which is filled with the latest in Electronic Entertainment games and equipment. A Snack Bar steeped with menu selections is bordered by a Birthday Party section set aside for those once-a-year occasions for celebrants of any age.

Spectators share a panoramic view while seating comfortably at tables neighboring any of the bowlers' chairs at the 24 alleys. Experienced youth and adult bowlers are encouraged to join leagues while inexperienced persons are supported by instructors and can even request one of the "Bungee Lanes" which by a press of a button, raises side rails which prevents the ball from falling into one of the gutters. All lanes are computer controlled allowing even for automatic scoring. Computer controlled Video Monitors can also display standard Cable TV programs on each of the double sets of overhead screens. Uniquely, the left hand screen can split allowing for the side-by-side lanes to continue scoring controls while the right hand screen can display ESPN Bowling Tournaments or Super Bowl games. Above the Pin Pit for each lane are graphic "Masking units" consisting of backdrop graphics depicting pastoral and holiday scenes. Bowling supplies are unlimited even to "Tiny Shoes" and "Light-weight Balls".

For before and after bowling, or for "Non-Bowlers", is the spacious *Sportsmen's Lounge* filled with televisions for every sporting occasion. The Park Ten Lanes' owner's, James English and his two sons, Gene and Robert are quite proud in producing such a unique and Family oriented entertainment plaza to Diamondhead. The manager, Leslie Styhl, welcomes everyone to visit or to join one of the on-going Leagues. [8]

Community Enrichment

The response to action evolved early in Diamondhead. It emanated from the very first Pilgrims. Support groups were promoted for all aspects of Community needs. These include: civic, education, culture, commerce, religion, youth, recreation, sports, political, and of course social activities.

Diamondhead residents realized the need to get together and organize, at first for social and entertainment reasons, and later, for causes such as establishing churches, schools and community planning and enrichment.

As in most developing communities, women are innovative and energetic in their creativity for their children, their husbands, their homes and for themselves. The early Pilgrims faced certain special problems and would rise to each occasion successfully. As each wave of new families have moved into the community, automatic amalgamation was beneficially assumed. Bake sales never go out of style as long as there is a cause.

Back in September of '73, all the ladies of Diamondhead were invited to attend an organizational meeting of the Diamondhead Ladies Social Luncheon Club. The culinary dishes consisted of *Cocquilles Saint Jacques, Beef Tornados Henry VIII, Jumbo Asparagus Spears, Glazed Belgian Carrots, and Cherries Jubilee.* The artful cuisine was offered at the Country Club for only $3.50 per person.

Kay Gex was the designated chairperson for the first meeting as the following ladies participated as hostesses. Dianna Wojdacz, Fire Department Auxiliary; Myra Piland, Bridge Club; Mary Hoppert, Ladies Golf Association; Mildred Cook, Homeowners Association; Jenny Milam, Garden Club; and Pat Shelton, Condominium Owners Association.

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[8] *"Interview with Leslie Styhl, May 1, 1995"*

Diamondhead residents maintained a cooperative spirit and sought amenable solutions in pursuing projects as well as resolving problems. The Diamondhead Community Association was called into action in 1976 with Bob Pflugfelder chairing 100 homeowners in raising their banner in protection of Community interests as well as the property owners' investments.

Classic arts and Cultural performances have been introduced and have become ingrained in the Community's aura of splendor. These have been sponsored by the Little Theatre, the Kids Theatre, the Players and the Diamondhead Performing Arts Society.

Sports and Recreation organizations are included in Golf, Tennis, Croquette, Bridge, Canasta, Boaters, Wild game, Dance, etc.

The Garden Club, and Newcomers Club, and Women's Club have also kept the ladies quite busy. In fact, Diamondhead affords a very busy schedule for anyone. All they need do is put their little finger out and someone will be by shortly to fill their order with a full plate of meaningful and exciting activities.

The energy resources of the residents keeps them with a busy pace. Many of them belong to three, four or more organizations. The ones who complain about having the busiest schedules are those who are retired. The following enumerates a listing of some of the most active clubs.

AARP Chapter 4228,

1st President, Joe Rotolo, October 1987, 55 members.

1995, Gertrude Wadington, 200 members. Meets 1st Tuesday of month at 3pm at the Country Club. AARP donates $30 monthly to Food Pantry.

Academy Board,

1st President, Duane Epler, September 1985, 45 members

1995, E. George Cassis

Art Association, (Artists Guild)

1st Chairmen, Charlotte Reshew and Dorothy Booth, April 1980

1995, Skip Alphonso, no meetings at present.

Betty Club, (Calling all Bettys)

1st Betty, Betty Claggett, September 1990, 40 members

A Fun Club that meets for Lunch at the Country Club once a year in celebrating the Elizabeths, Beths, Liz's, Bettys and any derivatives thereof. Their mascot is Betty Boop.

Boaters Association, (Krewe of Kamehameha)

1st Commodore, Johnny Bargar, May 1974, 15 members

1995, Commodore Tim Holt, 237 members. Meets bi-monthly by mailed notice. Social organization promoting the "*Festival of Lights*" consisting of a parade of Boats decorated with Christmas Lights and announcing Santa Clause from the last Launch to the crowds waiting at the Marina. The other Annual Mardi Gras functions are the Coronation Ball, the Mardi Gras Ball and the Mardi Gras Boat Parade, Shrimp Boil, Kentucky Derby Party, Summer Theme Party and Dance, Dog Race in Mobile, Golf Scramble and Hot Dog Party and the Halloween Dance.

The Boater's Association maintains a busy agenda which includes Mardi Gras, Halloween, Christmas and parties and more parties.

Bridge Party Club, (Ladies' Bridge)

1995 President, Mary Floyd, 120 members. Meets monthly for lunch and Bridge at the Country Club.

Business and Professional Association,

1st President, Jerry Sayre, December 1986, 24 members

1995, Dottie Council, 80 members. Meets 4th Thursday at Days Inn Motel at 8 am. Sponsors annual Merchant's Fair during April.

Business and Professional Organization members Clarice Gustin and Susan Ritten man the booth at the Business Convention touting Diamondhead.

Civic Council,

1st Chairman, Cliff Couture, September 1990, 18 members

This organization consisted of Presidents of all Diamondhead organizations. It existed for three years and has not been re-established.

High stakes at the Bingo were won by Ginger Morton who receives $500 from Chris Arnos.

Coast Guard Flotilla #33,

1st Commander, Captain Frank Hopper, 1976, 10 members

1995, Robert Thompson, 17 members. Meets monthly at Ship's Store. Promotes safety through classes on Seamanship. Patrols Jourdan River and offshore. Supports the Coast Guard squadron at Gulfport. Contact Ex-Commander Frank Gasper, Operations and Vessel Examination Officer for further information.

Community Association,

1st President, Bob Pflugfelder, October 1976, 100 members

1995, Bill Gudritz, 125 members, meets quarterly

Established as a civic improvement and advisory board separate from the Property Owners Association. Promotes civic responsibility in presenting "Meet the Candidates" and co-sponsoring July 4th celebrations and the annual Easter Egg Hunt and the Heart Fund Tournament. An 11 member Board of Directors meets monthly.

Dance Club and Cloggers, (Diamondhead Exhibition Dance Team)

1st President and Current, Ruth Olivier, 255-3477,

Bon Temps Roule' Line Dancing Mon/Wed 7 pm

Experimental Aircraft Association, Gulf Coast Chapter #479

1st President and Current, Bob McCullough, 255-3971, 1994, 30 members. Meets 1st Tuesday of month, 7 pm, Project Hangar at Stennis Airport. A World Wide organization composed of members who build and fly their own airplanes. Some members are also interested in restoring old air craft.

Fin and Feather Club,

1st President, Eddie Lockamy, 1990, 15 members

1995, Mike Callahan, 36 members, meets 1st Thursday of month, 5 pm, Ship's Store. Sportsmen's social dinner club. 3 men each month take turns preparing wild game or fish catch for the club. Annual Luau for men and their mates. Contact Tom Ballard for info.

Garden Club, (First Pilgrimage held in 1974)

1st President, Shirl Templet, September 1972

1995, Dr. Nancy Yarbrough 1995-96, Cathy McFaull 1994-95, Meets 3rd Wed. of Month at 10 am in Community Center. Sponsors Annual Spring Pilgrimage and Tour of Homes. Promotes Garden of the Month and Flower Shows and Workshops.

Kids Theatre,

1st President, Eddie Fernandez, April 1994

Managing Director, Dick Alves, writes all of the material for the Musical Comedies which are put on by the young folk of Diamondhead. Ages 4 to 18 are eligible and past productions show active participants of approximately 30. The Parents Committee and the officers and members assure continued support to the on-going casts of Kids.

Krewe of Diamondhead,

1st President, Tommy Heier, September 1982, 200 members

1995, Jerry Reshew

Krewe of Diamondhead
1995 Officers
President, Jerry Reshew
Treasurer, Jerry Bourg
Secretary, Nell Dennis
Lieutenants: Chris Arnos, Henry Burkhardt, Henry Kibler, Hilda Bourg
Mr. Mardi Gras Diamondhead, Benny Mistretta
Captain of the Krewe of Diamondhead

1994 Royalty Line-up -- The Noble Queens of the Krewe of Diamondhead. From left to right, Syble Paul, Ann Neff, Cecile Grice, Lorraine Heier, Dot Hoskins, Linn Godard, Betty Claggett, Hilda Bourg, Lee Fredian, Gert Wadington, Evelyn Kibler, Gisela Rainey, Billie Bahner, Alice Little, Char Hanson, Mary Hoppert, and Laura Almerico. (Two Queens not depicted are Sylvia Pross and Maealys Swartzendruber. Also not shown are Lou Lamendola was Land Queen for 1995 and Queen Alice Burkhardt for 1996.)

Lions Club,

1st President, Howard Peters, March 1993, 34 members

1995, Jim Gresset, In-coming Secretary, Betty Peters

Meets 1st & 3rd Tuesdays at 7 pm at the Community Center.

Little Theatre, (Currently Inactive)

1st President, Julie Kraft, August 1980

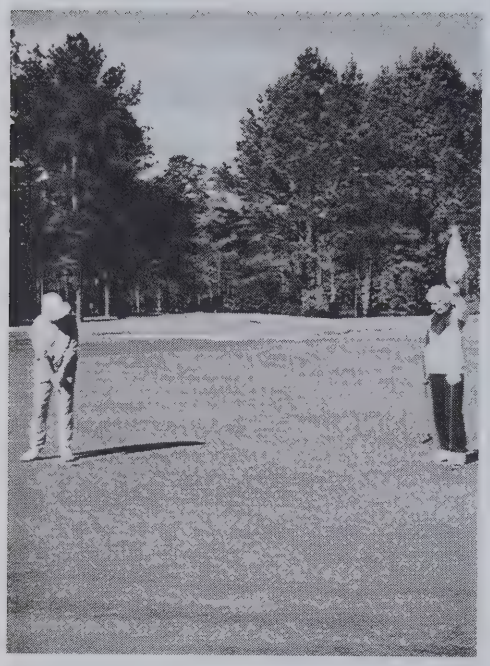
1995, Missy Marshall

Mens Gulf Association,

1st President, Ira Bull, April 1973, 25 members

1995, Russ Mayeur

A lonely player braving the winds while straddling the blanket of snow at Diamondhead in 1993.



Newcomers Club, (Mostly Women)

1st President, Lorraine Heier, May 1982, 25 members

1995, Gloria Gasper, 170 members. Meets 1st Friday of Month at Country Club at 2pm. Socially active. September is the New Inductees' Coffee. Get acquainted Lunches and Suppers at various locations along the Coast. A prior organizational effort was made in December of 1978 as initiated by former resident Marge Darling.

Nines Womens Golf,

1st President, Jo Gatepone, April 1978, 4 members

1995, Jimmie Sandel, 76 members, 2 meetings per year

A Directory of Rules and Members is published and distributed.

Performing Arts Society,

1st and Current President, Paul Eckrich, 1991.

Promotes cultural productions by Chorales and singers supported by noted personalities and talents. Introduced first full Symphonies, Orchestras, Ballets, Pops Concerts.

Players,

1st President, Rene Dufour

1995, Shirley Branchflower

Promotes Dinner Theatre productions

Property Owners Association Board,

1st President, Al Doussan, January 1985, 11 members

1995, James Van Norman,

Property Owners Association Board of Directors for 1994-95 are: seated, President Jim Van Norman adorned by Brierly Acker and Mary Sinders, The other men from left to right are Charles Butler, Paul Guichet, Al Cronvich, Ken Kipping, and Pete Casano. Not shown are: George Cassis, Judith Stahl, and James Hourin.

Republican Womens Club

1st President, Ruby Life, 1972, consisting of 90 members

1995, Patricia Reeb, 35 Members. Meets first Thursday, alternating between Diamondhead and other Hancock County communities.

Rotary Club,

1st President, Steve Planchard, March 1989, 24 members

1995, Dr. Gary Wiley, 30 members. Meets each Thursday at noon in the Days Inn. Contributions are made to Rotary International to underprivileged children.

Square & Compass Club, (Masonic Brotherhood)

1st President, Dan Smith, 1991, 5 members

1995, George Watkins, 40 members. Meets 2nd Wednesday of Month at Country Club at 3pm.

Squares Dance Club,

1st President, Harold & Gloria Fuchs, May 1987, 22 members

1995, Phil and Gerri Garberg, 40 members

Weekly Dances on Tuesdays from 7:30 to 9:30 except as announced for newcomers. Dancing is performed at St. Williams Hall, Ladner Road at Kiln.

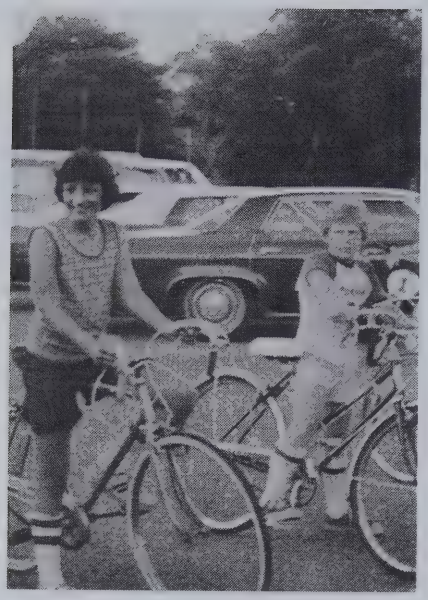
St. Vincent de Paul, (Ladies Of)

1st President, Dorothy Booth, 1975, 65 members.

1995, Co-Chair, Clarissa Eberhart and Betty Krieger.

Affiliated with Annunciation Catholic Church.

Lou Lamendola with a pair of Christmas cherubs at the Pancake Breakfast sponsored by the Rotary in 1991.



The 1976 Bicycle Races were joined by Kerry Mayeur and his friends.

Widows/Widowers Support Group, (Individual Counseling)

Chris Sigut was called in 1988 to form the Support Group for those in Grief and Depression. In finding that support was best offered in one-on-one basis, the group disbanded, but counsel is continued. Call 255-3598

Women's Club, (Non-profit fund-raising for Altzheimers Research)

1st President, Terri Downie, April 1993, 35 members

1995, Terri Downie, 100 members. Meets monthly. Sponsor active social calendar with musicals, art shows, craft shows. Funds also raised for homeless children and Hope Haven in Bay St. Louis.

Womens Gulf Association,

1st President, Mary Hoppert, November 1971, 11 members

1995,

Young Couples Club, (20s through 50s)

Organizers, Leslie Simpson, Laurie Darkow, Rick Fair, 1993. Sponsors Annual Social with Live Entertainment and food.

Youth Organization,

1st President, Tim Talley, 1993

1995 President, Roberta Lottes, Meets, 2nd Tuesday, 7 pm, Community Center. The Organization was established to function as a Youth Activity Coordinator and Advisory to the Property Owners Association. It also functions as the umbrella organization to the other ongoing Athletic Committees. The Organization has recently co-sponsored the Easter Egg Hunt and the Fourth of July annual celebrations. Other continuing activities sponsored are the Teen Dance, Swim Team, Youth Golf, and Youth Tennis Tournaments.

Diamondhead Performing Arts Society

The Diamondhead Performing Arts Society is currently in its fourth heavily scheduled season. The Society, its Board, its Honor Roll

of Sponsors and its Volunteers have introduced many wonderful accomplishments over the past few years. Through the leadership and dedication of these folks, many "firsts" have been brought to the Diamondhead cultural community. They introduced performances by a full symphony orchestra offering classical programs and pops concerts in addition to a superb chamber orchestra. World famous talented performers and ballets such the *Little Mermaid* and *The Nutcracker* are unforgettable moments. They are also credited with organizing the Bay Area Chorale which drafts eloquent singers from nearby churches to assist.

Paul Eckrich is first to pass the accolades to his supporting network of fund raisers and active volunteers in publicity, programming and event participation. The annual Magnolia Ball is featured as one of the top events for Diamondhead.

Pioneer Members besides Paul Eckrich, included Brierley Acker, Dick Alves, Ray Bane, Barbara Boos, Betty Claggett, Toni Cumming, Lori Darkow, Delora Diekema, Gerry Diekema, Carol Eckrich, Angie Golding, Ann Jackson, Sue Stewart, Curtis Stout and Margaret Williamson.

Each year's performance has been bigger and better due to the efforts of all these challenged persons who keep themselves involved with the Arts. The supporting roles endowed by Dennis and Nancy Assaf of the Jefferson Performing Arts Society has effectively provided a stimulus to the ongoing productions.

Eckrich has further challenged the educational and cultural community to inspire the interests of the young aficionados to participate in the organization of a Youth Performing Arts Society as an extension of the DPAS. [9]

Religious Groups

DIAMONDHEAD CHURCHES

Three churches surround the Community Center, and numerous denominations are represented locally. The Diamondhead Community Church, St. Thomas Episcopal Church, and the Diamondhead Baptist Church have their own church house facilities.

Three churches surround the Community Center and numerous denominations are represented locally. The Diamondhead Community also has access to churches in the neighboring towns and villages.

The Diamondhead Hebrew Congregation, The Diamondhead United Methodist Church, and the Gulf Coast Unitarian/Universal

[9] *"Interview with Paul Eckrich, May 22, 1995."*

Fellow meet at the Community Center. And, The Discipleship Baptist Church meets at The Diamondhead Academy.

Diamondhead Baptist Church

The revelation of Diamondhead Baptist Church was started in January 1975 when a small group of residents met in worship at the then Fairway Villa Motel with the Reverend David Fornby preaching.

A Mission was born on July 6, 1975 with 19 people in attendance. The mission was sponsored by the First Baptist Church of Bay St Louis actively supporting as the Mother Church. Responding to the first invitation call were: Myra Craft, Miriam and Milton Haggard, Dorothy Jordan, Mabel Martin, Frances Mayfield, and Judy Pino. The first Interim Pastor was Dr. J. W. Brister and within a few months, the first Sunday School began holding classes.

In October of 1975, the first Chapel building used by the Mission was a double-wide mobile unit loaned by the Gulf Coast Baptist Association. Diamondhead Baptist Mission became Diamondhead Baptist Church on September 23, 1979. The first land purchased for construction of church buildings was a gift from the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board in November 1975. This was a 3 1/2 acre site which is located on Diamondhead Drive North and Noma Drive. The first service was held in the new building on March 23, 1980 with 121 people in attendance.

Diamondhead Baptist Church is the oldest church in the Diamondhead community, having begun as a mission on July 6, 1975. The first service was held in the new building on March 23, 1980 with 121 people in attendance.

On May 4, 1980 the following deacons were ordained, Uless Bergeron, Guy Clay, Hoyte Johnson, and Chester Partridge. The first full-time pastor, the Reverend Paul Oglesbee began his ministry on February 12, 1984. Dr. Fred G. Womack was called as pastor in February 1991. Bobby Rayburn joined the staff as Minister of Youth in August 1993. Fred Prince began his Interim as Music Director.

Ground breaking ceremonies for the second building, an education building, were held on June 19, 1986. The first Sunday School in the new building was held on February 8, 1987. By the completion date in 1988, the entire project was debt free. A Youth Building was added September 1992 and because of the increased membership, two Sunday Worship Services were started.

As the community has grown, so has Diamondhead Baptist Church. Many new programs for children and youth began. New Sunday School and Discipleship Training classes had been organized. With the addition of many fine young families, Diamondhead Baptist Church now offers mission organizations and choirs for pre-schoolers and other youth. The Bible Club has become well attended by many of the unchurched children in the community.

Vacation Bible School surpassed past years with 187 in attendance during the summer of 1994.

On May 4, 1980, the first marriage ceremony was proclaimed with Pam Jordan joining with Dominic San Filipo. [10]

Diamondhead Community Church

affiliated with the Presbyterian Church

The dream of a church building in Diamondhead was fomented by a gathering of folk seeking to establish an interdenominational church. Through periods of evolvement, the Presbytery of South Mississippi sponsored the spiritual growth by purchasing the present property, a contribution towards the construction of the present structure, and financial support of an Evangelist minister. Reverend Dwyn Mounger served as the organizing Evangelist from 1980 to 1982 with assistance from a Seminary student, Mark Jumper during 1980 and 1981.

The Little Church in The Wildwood. The character of the Diamondhead Community Church has been profoundly impacted by its antecedents. A group of persons from several denominations gathered together in the late 1970s to establish a community church which would be interdenominational in orientation.

The Church was organized into a Presbyterian congregation on November 15, 1981 with 66 charter members providing some accommodations and modifications for those wishing to welcome in members from other denominations.

A new church building was formally dedicated on February 28, 1982, however, almost immediately the congregation realized that the building was not large enough to handle the numerous activities as already planned for the year. Therefore, approval was granted to expand the existing building by adding a large room to the rear.

Reverend Mark Jumper became the first full-time resident pastor in June of 1982 following his ordination. The first wedding ceremony was performed on March 19, 1982. The smiling couple was

[10] *"Historic Collection Diamondhead Baptist Church"*

Carol Obermeyer and Richard Nall. The first Baptism was for the infant Sally Cutler on August 8, 1982.

The Little School began its first sessions in September of '82. Diamondhead Community Church was incorporated in Mid-November with Harold Marshall as its President and *Women of the Church* were inaugurated with the election of Eleanor Rawls as its President. Pastor Jumper published the first *Crier* newsletter during that month and in continuance with a very busy schedule, the Brownie Troop was chartered.

The Church is symbolized by the sketch displayed on the cover of its newsletter and for that reason it is frequently called *The Little Church in The Wildwood.* The congregation invites members of any denomination to join with them in that the Church has a provision for dual membership. It allows a person to retain connections with his or her original congregation while becoming affiliated with the new services.

Reverend Paul Richards became the resident Pastor on February 15, 1987. Reverend Amos Hood is "Parish Associate". The Church is in process of continued expansion with the addition of a new Administration/Education building. Current membership in the Diamondhead Community Church is 285. [11]

St. Thomas' Episcopal Church

Sometimes a little advertising goes a long way. As a result of an announcement calling for Episcopalians in the Diamondhead News in 1982, nineteen Christians assembled at the first gathering. At the following assembly there were 23 supportive members committing to the formation of a new Mission and selecting the name of St. Thomas. Reverend Charles Johnson submitted mission formulations to the growing number who attended a reception hosted by Mr. and Mrs. Holcomb Hector in November of 1982. Recommendations were effected in May of 1983 for the establishment of a Mission station in Diamondhead.

Services were offered initially by Rev. Johnson and later by Rev. Roy Bascom in the Aloha Room at the Country Club. By way of a different type of advertising, one of the parishioners commented on how inappropriate it would be to conduct a burial service at the Country Club. This resulted in an earnest endeavor on the part of a few members to translate the remark into reality. Ground breaking ceremonies were held on June 17, 1984 followed by approval of

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[11] *"Historic Collection Diamondhead Community Church"*

architectural plans, construction, and the creation of a debt free edifice as generously bestowed by avid members of the congregation. The forty foot Carillon Tower, as completed, supports a two ton bell illuminated by floodlights at night, topped by a modest white cross and channels soul-uplifting, musical strains throughout the community.

The Diocesan Council granted Mission status in January 1985 and the first services were offered on Palm Sunday, March 31, 1985 in the new edifice. Reverend Durrie Hardin celebrated the Eucharist on this occasion insisted on the presence of Honkey the Donkey owned by Mr. and Mrs. George Cassis. Honkey was fully decked out with palms.

The Right Reverend Duncan Gray, Bishop of the Diocese of Mississippi dedicated and consecrated St. Thomas' Episcopal Church the following month.

Reverend Meredith Jones Spencer served as Vicar from 1985 through 1988 during which time the church grew rapidly in size and membership. Sunday School rooms were added, Day Care facilities were initiated, and a Columbarium was installed.

St. Thomas Episcopal Church began in 1982. Its First services were held in the Diamondhead Country Club and the Diamondhead Motel until our church building was completed in 1985. Four Sunday School rooms were added in 1986, and the sanctuary was enlarged in 1990.

Reverend Barry Cotter was established as vicar in 1988 and served through the first Sunday in January of 1992. Once again St. Thomas' experienced considerable growth and expanded the church building to meet the needs of its parishioners. It was during this period that the church achieved parish status.

Reverend Linda Lowry, who is currently serving at St. Thomas', was the first female priest in the Diocese to be called by a parish. Sunday Worship is at 8:00 a.m. and 10:30 a.m. and Wednesday Worship is at 7:00 p.m. Sunday Church School is at 9:15 a.m. [12]

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[12] *"Historic Collection St. Thomas Episcopal Church"*

Diamondhead United Methodist Church

The first service of Diamondhead United Methodist Church was conducted on August 16, 1992, in an office building on Gex Road. There were 12 people present, including the Rev. Bill Jenkins, pastor of the Clermont Harbor-Pearlington Charge. Even though only two of the 12 worshipers were Diamondhead residents, the spiritual quest by Mrs. Jack (Florence) Holt and Hank Bulloch was strong. The other worshipers were members of the Clermont Harbor and Pearlington Churches who offered their support to this new effort. Mrs. Holt was the first person to become a member of the new Church followed by Mr. Bulloch.

It didn't take long before the small congregation outgrew its first facilities and moved their services to the Diamondhead Community Center. On December 20, 1992, District Superintendent E.L. Henry presided at the constitution service for Diamondhead United Methodist Church. On that day, twenty-two people joined the church.

Diamondhead United Methodist Church has a short, but exciting History. This past June of 1995 their deed signing was officiated. In just two months the enthusiastic congregation raised $35,000 to apply toward the planned sanctuary.

Diamondhead UMC is proud of its talented musicians and choir who have served the church from its inception. Mrs. Penny Zahn has offered her home for weekday Bible study for the past two years. Many members are actively involved with the ministries of the Southwest Fellowship Cluster and Seashore District.

Diamondhead United Methodist Church has a short, but exciting history. They are proud to be a part of Diamondhead and are excited about the future of both,the community and the church. Membership is growing along with more people participating in worship and ministries. As ever, Diamondhead UMC is a caring, growing, dedicated group of Christians who love God and love each other.

In June 1995, the Church officers completed the deed signing for three choice acres of land adjoining the Diamondhead Community Church. In just two months effort the congregation raised $35,000 to apply toward a planned sanctuary. They seek to hasten the day when they break ground on their new building and to have a full-time minister in Diamondhead.

Church officers at Diamondhead UMC for 1995 include Jim Delaney, Lay Leader/Council Chair; Jeane Odom, Treasurer; and H.G. Dean, Chair of Trustees. Sunday school classes are led by Captain John Sears for adults, Neuva Sears for children, and Gaylene O'Cain for the older Youth. [13]

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[13] *"Historic Collection, Diamondhead UMC"*

Diamondhead Hebrew Congregation

The Diamondhead Hebrew Congregation is an outgrowth of an "*Old Testament*" study class lead by the late Norman Pailet. Mr. Pailet lived in Israel many years, fought in the Israeli War of Independence, and was a true student of the Bible. The study group began in 1986. These Thursday night study groups were later changed to the Jewish Sabbath, Friday. We combined the Reformed Jewish services with a Biblical Study. Since Norman Pailet's death, our lay leader has been Jerry Reshew. Our services at 5:30 p.m. each Friday take place in the Bridge Room of the Community Center. Although the group is not large, the quality equals many more rigid congregations. Discussion is our key word and we all feel as if we are blessed by being able to add this dimension to our Diamondhead week. [14]

Discussion is our key word and we all feel as if we are blessed by being able to add this dimension to our Diamondhead week.

Cemeteries at Diamondhead

St. Joseph Rotten Bayou Cemetery

This distinctive cemetery is located to the North of Diamondhead by way of Kapalama Drive to Rotten Bayou. The quiet family Cemetery has been used for the Fenton, Kiln and other neighboring villages.

Francois Cuevas, son of Juan de Cuevas, [John Cuevas] famous for inhabiting Cat Island, purchased 40.69 acres in January of 1841 upon moving to the Fenton area. The property became used as a family cemetery plot and upon his death, Francois was buried there. His wife, Felicete Moran Cuevas was also buried alongside him a number years later. On August 7, 1893 the nine surviving children donated the 40 acre plot to the County to be used as a public cemetery. The Cuevas gravesite is signaled by a tall flag pole at the north side of the church yard. The plot is enveloped by a very ornate wrought iron fence. A marble head marker is weathered causing the following epitaph to be barely legible.

Rotten Bayou Cemetery
Commission Members

Clifford Lizana
Jimmy R. Ladner
Randall Mauffray

[14] *"As reported by Mrs. Lawrence Abrahms"*

A cemetery is a history of people. It is a perpetual record of yesterday and a sanctuary of peace and quiet today.

Most of the grave sites are fenced in with chain-link, brick, wood, or wrought iron. The Cemetery derived its name from the St. Joseph Church which was formerly located nearby on the banks of Rotten Bayou.

When tempers mild their hearts sincere
And all their neighbors loved them dear
With hope and joy their souls took flight
To Regions of Eternal Light

Many of the grave sites are uniquely enclosed and cordoned off by fencing consisting of wood, chain-link, brick, and wrought iron. The fencing in some cases tends to obscure and remove the dignity of the burial ground. Some folks actually think of it as a Pet Cemetery. Cemetery Commission member Clifford Lizana stated that prior to Diamondhead, the rolling hills and gullies were used for grazing land for cattle and hogs. The wild hogs started rooting up the graves which caused site owners to fence in their plots. Eventually, most of the plots became fenced in. A sign posted at the entrance to the Cemetery announces *No Fences Allowed*. Lizana wants to propose to the County Board of Supervisors to further restrict the fencing and to ask all owners to remove the unsightly threading. The County must first erect extended fencing around the whole cemetery acreage.

There are a number of unmarked grave sites dating back to its early years. Prior to the building of the Kiln Church of the Annunciation, missionaries came from New Orleans and Mobile to baptize and consecrated the graves of the early 18th century settlers. "Some of the old folks from the Kiln have reported some graves to have been there since 1817", reported Lizana. [15]

"The Cemetery derived its name from the St. Joseph Church which was formerly located nearby on the banks of Rotten Bayou. Access to the church was usually best navigated by boat, thus the immediate area was known as the *Church House Lake*. The church was destroyed by a hurricane in the early 1900's" [16]

Upon entering the church yard, there is a low spot immediately on the left which was set aside for Negroes who worked as share croppers and hired hands for the local citizenry. The graves without name markers are tombs for the Osmonds, the Burtons, and *Boots* who was the top Black for Vic Faye, one of the big political land owners. [17]

Many relatives, local and afar, make an annual trek to clean-up and place new flowers and candles on All-Saint's Day. A beloved area priest, Father Dennis, originally from Belgium, was buried there in

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[15] *"Interview with Clifford Lizana, April 28, 1995"*

[16] *"Howard, p. 7"*

[17] *"Interview with Constable Leo Ladner, May 23, 1995"*

1953. Ever since, many observers attend a special ceremonial Mass offered to the Priest and the many others there interred.

Just before the entrance to the Burial grounds is a Memorial Garden which has been set aside and maintained by the Diamondhead Garden Club. Placed beneath the shading branches of a tree shrouded arbor are polished stone memorials from recent years. When Mrs. Joseph Finley was President of the Garden Club, one of the main activities was the "Plant Gold" project as part of the beautification program. Beds of yellow daffodils were planted in the form of a cross by Charlie Cantrell in memory of his wife, Josephine. It was during that same year that the Memorial Garden was proposed. Dorothy Booth is another avid enthusiast seeking to keep the memory of more than thirty deceased persons who have been commemorated there. Her example infuses others to provide continued care for the cemetery providing resplendence and honoring those who have passed on.

Moran Family Cemetery

In years gone by, there were numerous individual family burial plots. One that has been preserved is another illusive grave yard is the Moran Cemetery. It is cozied into a clearing of brush area enclosed by a dome covering of trees, vines and thickets. Roped off in the center of the exposed area are 13 unmarked crosses. This small cemetery is located off the access road passing The Diamondhead Community Church. Its setting is appropriate to be near three neighboring churches.

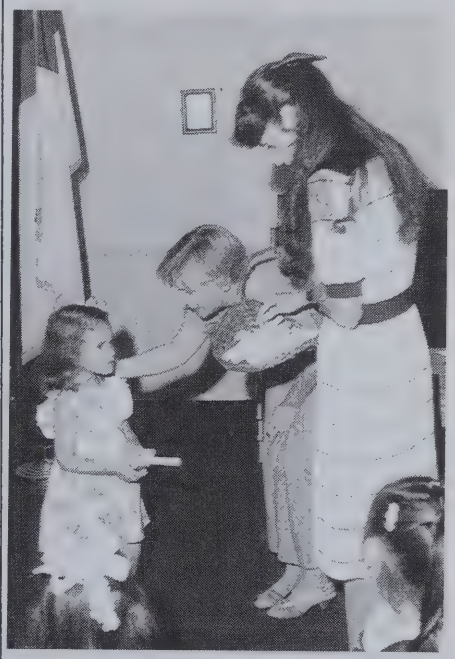
The remaining family members have indicated their intentions to memorialize the small cemetary within the next few years.

The Moran Cemetery is a very obscure and small family burial ground. It is not known to most residents even though it neighbors the Diamondhead Community Church.

Educational Facilities

The Little School

An Educational Outreach Program
Diamondhead Community Church



Little Schooler Mac Allister Marshall receives her certification from Lauren Neale as Carol Prats congratulates her.

"The Little School began as a mustard seed in the hand of a parent in Diamondhead - Jenny Norwood - in 1982. She had a group of children coming to her home to learn how to play together, how to

Little Alicia Aspen receives her diploma from Carol Prats as Anita Montgomery looks on.

sing together, and how to learn together. The need was great and the group grew into a feasible pre-school of 3's, 4's, and 5 [years of age]. The Diamondhead Community Church agreed to let Jenny and her group of mothers use their nursery as a school room five mornings a week. The classes were immediately full and a waiting list formed." [18]

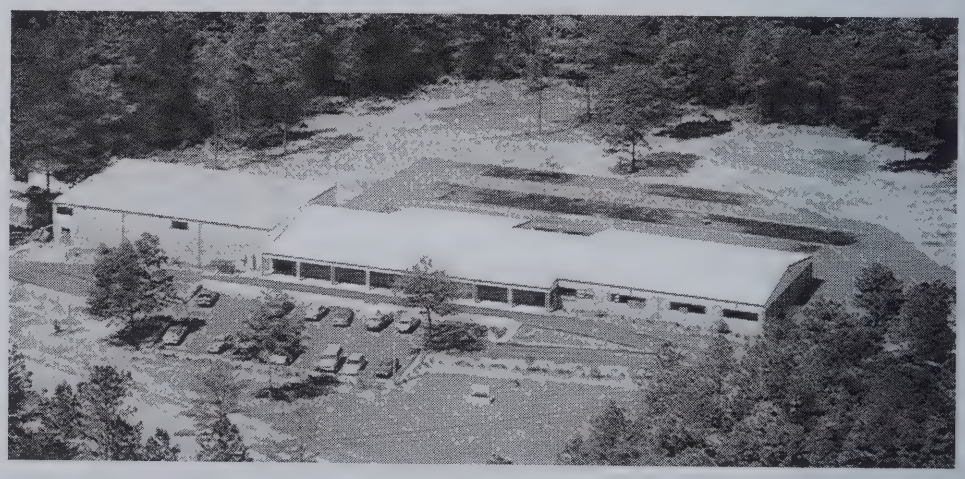
In its creation, the Diamondhead Community Church took up the challenge to meet the needs of the youth by constructing a room addition at a cost of $20,000. An agreement was made with the community group and the Little School was launched.

Over the years, various classes and age starts were changed with the opening of The Diamondhead Academy and as new educational policies were put into effect. Activity oriented classes are provided to two age groups. Four years old attend on Tuesdays and Thursdays and the Five years old attend Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays. Enrollment is on a first come first serve basis and is open to all denominations and residents of Diamondhead as well as the surrounding communities.

Diamondhead Academy

Education Par Excellence

The Academy opened in 1985 with its first school facility constructed on its five acre tract. Through the efforts of a group of active parents of pre-teen's seeking responsible private education for their children, resulted in the creation of a K-Six school. The consequence was a nearby school plant with excellent educational facilities. The Diamondhead Academy has recently expanded to 17,000 square feet. The Academy has a proven record of student SAT scores.



The Diamondhead Academy became a reality through its aggressively, dedicated parents and the benevolence of supportive benefactors.

[18] *"Montgomery, Little School History, p.43"*

It is considered to be an outstanding learning institution, enrolling children from kindergarten through Grade 6. Day Care is offered for children between the ages of 2 to 4 years.

Diamondhead Academy is as wonderful a success story as any can be told. It is a demonstration of the pioneering spirit and the spiritual determination of parents and philanthropic individuals who want the best opportunities afforded by a sound educational program in a wholesome environment close to home for children during their early years. This need was first manifested in the creation of the Little School. As a result of the young population of graduates from kindergarten, mothers found they were force to make unwarranted travel distances. Parents got together with a common goal. Several meetings were held with the leadership of Diane Bennett, Mary Gobert, and Bonnie King. The community responded with interest. The Purcell Company assigned the services of an architect and turned over the land which had been set aside for the project. An interim School Board was established with the appointment of Don Benge at its helm. Fund-raising activities were generated to purchase portable buildings. A Community Work Day was declared where parents and friends an a network of residents young and old prepared for the opening day in September 1995. 45 students were enrolled. Duane Eppler was elected as the first School Board President and Brierley Acker was elected to the Diamondhead PTO. [19]

The Academy has two major fundraisers. One is a $10,000 Draw Down and the other is the Annual Arts and Crafts Fair. The attendance continues to grow as exhibited in 1990.

Diamondhead Academy became a reality. The school currently sponsors the Annual Arts and Crafts Fair and a $10,000 draw down as primary fund raisers.

The School staff consists of 18 personnel with Cal Rogers as its Principal. George Cassis is the current President of the School Board. All teachers of the Academy are certified and experienced in the fields they are teaching. Diamondhead Academy maintains a low student-teacher ratio to insure optimum learning conditions. Small classes make individual instruction a reality in its grades of pre-school through six.

Neighboring Schools

Other elementary schools, both public and private, are available near Diamondhead. Hancock County High School recently moved into a new $11.5 million complex that is a state of the art facility. St Stanislaus and Coast Episcopal Schools offer first class private secondary education and are a short drive from Diamondhead.

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[19] *"The Cooking School Cook Book, pp. 11-13"*

Medical Institutions

Diamondhead Hancock Medical Clinic

Family Medicine

The Clinic opened in February, 1994. It is administered by the Hancock Medical Center located only 10 miles away in Bay St. Louis. Family Care offers a full range of primary health care services for all members of the family . . . from infants to grandparents. Care emphasizes wellness and preventative medicine, as well as treatment of illness or injury. An immediate care treatment room is available for treating minor emergencies and injuries. Facilities are also available for minor surgical procedures. Other services provided at the office include EKG monitoring, pulmonary function studies and inhalation therapy, cryosurgery, exercise stress testing, holter and ambulatory blood pressure monitoring, colposcopy and an on-site full-service laboratory.

Family Care offers a full range of primary health care services for all members of the family.

Rehab Associates, Inc.

Rehab Associates is located in the new Shepherds Square development located at the southeast section leaving the Shopping Plaza. Rehab Associates provides a full range of out-patient Physical Therapy services tailored to individual patient' needs, rendered by skilled professionals on a physician referral basis. Rehabilitation services include accidents to bone, joint and extremities. Pain Control therapy includes modalities of heat, cold, ultrasound, massage, electrical stimulation, lontophoresis, traction and manual therapy. Other services involve exercise training, pool therapy, and consultation. The owners are the husband and wife team of Jan A. Wiley, RPT and Gary J. Wiley, Ph.D.

Rehab Associates provides a full range of out-patient physical therapy services tailored to individual patient needs.

Woodland Village Nursing Center

Upon entering Diamondhead, just off Gex Drive to the West, is a quiet, attractive, skilled-care nursing facility. The complex offers professional, therapeutical, nursing services to their patients who are in need of rehabilitative care. Woodland Village provides a comfortable living situation and a dedicated alertness to dietary needs

of each resident. As a private-pay facility, the staff at Woodland Village includes registered nurses and licensed practical nurses, a registered dietician and dietary manager, a licensed social worker, a certified activities director, and licensed nursing home administrators. The physical property encompasses a medical and administrative building, a spacious private and semi-private residence structure, and ample open grounds and gardens.

Woodland Village Nursing Center offers professional, therapeutical, and rehabilitative nursing services.

The Turning Point

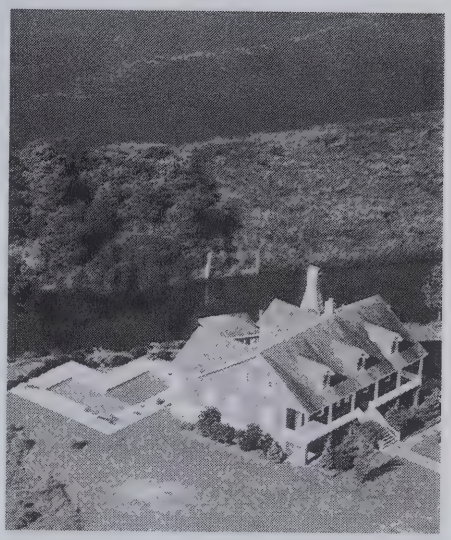
To the first wave of players, Diamondhead became their private vacation land. The lots were relatively inexpensive and buying a lot became a ticket to membership in an exclusive upscale weekend resort.

Diamondhead Golf courses are beautiful year round. This view is of the Cardinal Course facing the tee at #15.

Some folks immediately purchased a condo. Needless to say, following the Halls, the Hopperts, the Criss's and other pioneering spirits, more and more folks ventured into building homes. In fact, 45

families had built houses by the end of 1972. Friends were bringing in friends. By the end of 1975 there were 115 houses.

The large staff of salesmen and the heightened promotions during the '70s kept a pace of intensified exhilaration and escalated passions for increased sales. These very same attitudes were conveyed upon every person sporting a membership. Diamondhead experienced its turning point in 1977. That year demonstrated significant growth in completions of the infrastructure and to community amenities. With Stennis Space Center expanding, and the Oceanographic Offices relocating from Washington D.C., this further resulted in expanding sales. Diamondhead, during that year, had 220 houses completed and 344 occupied condos. The population increased to approximately 1400. The "original" Country Club had made renovations to the main dining room and added the "19th hole". The First Cardinal "nine" was opened to add to the older "Pines" and "Magnolia" courses. The East Recreation Center was completed, the Tennis Pro Shop was opened, a new Horse Show Arena prepared for Rodeo Week, the boat population tripled at the Yacht Club. Two Mardi Gras Krewes officiated and promenaded with 25 Land units and 16 boats by Sea. That following October was celebrated with a Land, Sea and Air Show. During the following year, Dan Smith, sales manager for the Diamondhead Project, reported the best year ever.



The Homes at Diamondhead are as varied as is its people. They range from quiet, unpretentious homes to elegantly emblazoned Show Places. This elegant home is located on the point on the South Side off the Bay and the Jourdan River.

By 1985 there were 795 homes and at the end of 1994 Diamondhead had 1,904 homes not including approximately 600 condo units at the Villages of Molokai, Kona, Lanai, Lakeside, Highpoint, and Harbor Townhouses. Joe Salvatore stated that 1995 was a slow start based on January, but the indications of March and April improved. Joe hazards a prediction of 150 new houses for '95, thereby bringing the total of Diamondhead residences for the twenty-five year growth period to Two Thousand and Fifty-five. Indeed, Diamondhead is the fastest growing and largest residential, retirement and resort area in Mississippi, if not the Gulf South.

During the first ten years, housing modifications and additions were made to only five homes. However, during the following ten years, additions were constructed on more than 150 residences, whereas, during the four years of 1990 to 1994, an astonishing number of expansions jumped to a total of 330 homes. During the past five years lot transfers almost doubled from 1990. From 1990 through 1994 more than 3000 lots were sold. These recent figures indicate a settling-in process by more and more full time residents.

Coast Delta Realty population estimates for 1994 were reported at 5,100 residents. Therefore, a safe projection for the year ending 1995 would put the total population count at approximately 5,500

residents. Younger couples have made a strong presence in making purchases during the past five years. Jon Ritten, Sr. reported that at the end of 1993 there were 650 young people under the age of 18.

The Takeover

If anyone was ever better suited to be President of the POA at the time of the Transfer of Amenities in 1985, it was Glenn Smith. He deserves a lot of credit and gratitude in his negotiations of the *Takeover*, which is what the transition was called. He had the right profile. He was a retired Army man, a former Chief of Staff to Governor Finch of Mississippi, an assistant to U.S. Senator Stennis, and, further, a Briefing Officer to President Eisenhower. His negotiations were extensive in working out the many details both with Holcomb Hector representing the Purcell Corporation and with his fellow POA Board members. His frequent meetings with Hector exceeded 75 occasions and extended into several hundreds of hours of diligent bargaining.

Glenn Smith maneuvered the negotiations for the POA's position to take over the ownership and management of Diamondhead. The amenities were valued at $20,000,000.

The objective of the POA was to bring about an orderly and congenial transition and one that would not place the POA in a debt carry-forward position. The POA had prudently placed a $2.00 assessment per lot, which brought in $200,000.00 to the treasury. Smith also negotiated an earlier takeover date by six months in order to take advantage of the *SnowBird* golfing season which produced necessary operating capital for the imminent *Takeover*. "Working with Holcomb Hector was one of respect for a tough negotiator who was like-minded in seeking to avoid a court issue or law suit," related Smith. "Each impasse was settled in an above board and straight forward manner by the Purcell Group and by the POA Board," he continued. The final result was a transaction sale deeding all of the property amenities to the POA for $1.00 and the acquisition of all equipment and furnishings for a cash settlement of $200,000.00. The amenities inventory included 90 miles of streets and all improvements and common areas valued at $20,000,000.00. [1]

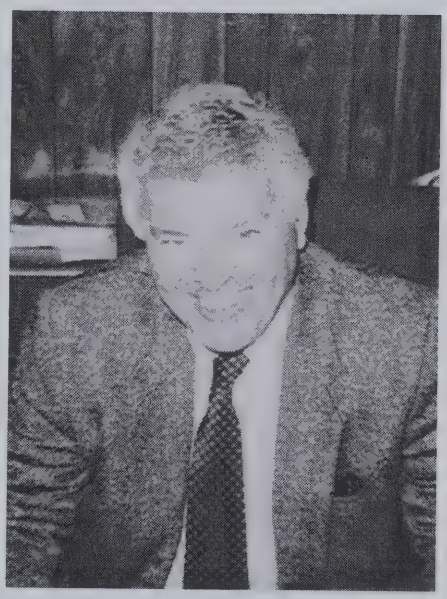
[1] *"Interview with Glenn Smith, June 1, 1995"*

Changing of the Guard

In accordance with original empirical dictates, the Diamondhead Corporation was fully in control of every aspect of governing and enforcing all rules and regulations. This care-taking regimen was to end by June of 1985 by contractual agreement. Holcomb Hector, vice president of the Purcell Co., Inc. (formerly the Diamondhead Corporation), fulfilled the agreement six months early by turning over the "*Keys to the City*" in January of 1985. The Diamondhead Country Club and Property Owners Association, Inc., more usually called the POA, took the helm and have officially represented Diamondhead for the past ten years. The General Manager at that time was Robert Barnes. All amenities including the Country Club, Community Center, Tennis Courts, Golf Courses, Pro shop , Yacht Club, Marina, Riding Stables, Recreation Centers, Swimming Pools, Playgrounds, Airport and hanger, and all Community streets were transferred to the POA for the sale price of One Dollar.

The transfer of assets took place in January 1985. Paul Montjoy, General Manager, states that Diamondhead is the safest community in all of the Gulf South states.

The Purcell interests retained ownership of the Diamondhead Utility Company until 1989. They have continued their presence with ownership of approximately 2000 acres of undeveloped residential land and about fifty acres of commercial property including the Diamondhead Inn and the Diamondhead Plaza Shopping Center. The Purcell interests have continued with construction of condominiums and residential developments.



Paul Montjoy enjoys his work and willingly tackles every job.

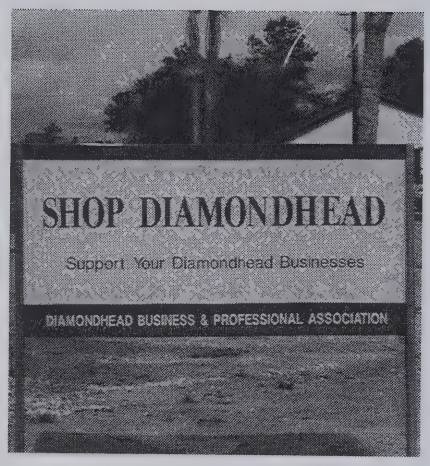
Paul Montjoy, served as Project Manager, with the Purcell Corporation from 1972 until 1978. In an amused tone he reflected to his first encounter with Diamondhead. Following an interview and appraisal session he was engaged immediately to take over management of the project exclusive of land sales. His instructions were simply to go to Bay St. Louis and seek out the Diamondhead office atop the Hancock Bank Building. Realizing that he would better perform at the site, he drove out the next day and decided to move his operations into one of the five model homes on location. Paul left the firm for a temporary period and returned to take the helm of the Association and has steered the course during the forward thrust and increase in growth that has taken place.

Paul enjoys his work. He is proud of the community and feels very supportive of its residents as well as the staff that he directs. In his role with the Gulf Coast Crime Commission, he remarks,

"Diamondhead is the safest community in all of the Gulf South States." He further explains that, "just as a person has the right to control what happens in his home, represents the same power of influence that the POA security command has on Diamondhead streets and its amenities. A policeman has no right whatsoever to stop a car and simply order them out of a city. But in Diamondhead, any car that is of non-member status can be immediately escorted out of the ten square mile complex." [2]

Commercial Development

Diamondhead has a very active Business and Professional Association with approximately 100 members. The membership is ever expanding and represents a wide cross section of the community. The Rotary Club of Diamondhead meets weekly on Thursdays at noon in the Days Inn. The Lions Club meets the first and third Tuesday of the month at 7:00 p.m. in the Community Center. The Business and Professional Club meets monthly.



Diamondhead's commercial area has grown to accommodate more than 100 business and professional services and enterprises.

Commercial development has occurred in response to the residential population increase. In addition there has been a serious increase in traffic to the area. Also many of the Community organizations and institutions have an open policy which invites people from the surrounding towns and cities to participate. There is a continuous influx of *Snow Birds* who take advantage of Golf and Tennis packages. Diamondhead now has 18 locations to purchase food or to sit and "wine and dine". There are 14 sources for personal care and grooming. There are 10 medical service locations. Residents have immediate access to 4 gasoline stations and a number of local services for automobiles or their boats and airplanes. There are 4 banks, hardware stores, lumber and prefab yards, a health spa, a motel with 175 rooms, a school and several day care centers, rental condo's, a professional plaza, a medical plaza, and numerous retail and specialty shops. Churches are abundant as well as a progressive growth in business service outlets.

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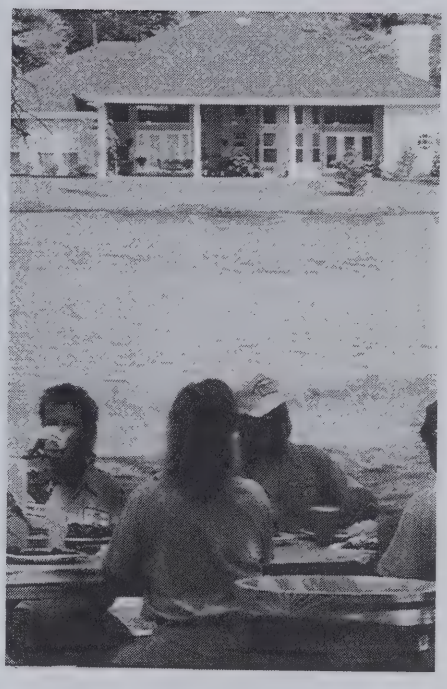
[2] *"Interview with Paul Montjoy, March 30, 1995"*

39525 Diamondhead ZIP Code

Population growth and residential expansion in Diamondhead was significantly signaled when the postal authorities bestowed the community with its own designated ZIP code. Diamondhead, Mississippi 39525 was celebrated with the advent of its own Postal Unit. Prior to that, it was identified as the outskirts of Bay St. Louis. Nearby smaller but historically known communities, such as Kiln and Fenton and DeLisle, have long had a flag planted on the map. But, now, Diamondhead, in less than its 25 years of existence, portrays its own identity on the map. Interstate 10 bisects the community with Exit 16 Interchange at its front door and Exit 20 at its back door. It sits atop the highest ground between Texas and Florida. It is almost entirely surrounded by water thereby keeping it in containment an added security. It originated as a resort development of ten square miles which is a larger land mass than other communities in the area.

During the first couple of years, mail pick up was in Pass Christian. Folks had to become familiar with Kapalama Drive and the back access to the Kiln/DeLisle Road. When postal delivery started, Hancock County out of Bay St. Louis assigned ZIP code 39520 for incoming mail. However, in January of 1992, 39525 came into existence and the present Postal Unit was opened on June 14, 1993.



Most of the businesses are set in a wooded wonderland with an occasional picnic at any door step.

The Post Office

The Diamondhead CPU or Post Office is under an independent contract with April Clement and Brenda Smith who also operate *We Can Do That!* which is a business service offering Fax and Computer services. They do transcription, bookkeeping, word processing and just about any thing else for an office environment. The Central Postal Unit has recently moved to 3090-B Leisure Time Drive.

255 Exchange

The first telephone exchanges were 452 and 467, but these were later converted to the present 255 prefix which covers all of the Diamondhead area.

Diamondhead Commercial Districts

Aloha Drive runs through the Eastern Commercial Zone with Diamondhead Plaza Shopping Center located at top of photo.

North of the Interstate Interchange, upon entering Diamondhead and reaching the 4-way Stop Intersection, divides the present major Commercial District by East and West. The Eastern section supports both the old and the new businesses. Burger King and the Chevron Gas Station are on adjacent corners. Proceeding East, the Hinkey Dinkey building is the oldest commercial structure. It accommodates several businesses. On the opposite side of Aloha Drive is a planned commercial development called Indian Hill. Proceeding past several businesses and Bank branch offices is the Diamondhead Plaza Shopping Center which houses an additional number of major stores. The Plaza replaces what was originally called the Bali Hai Mini-Mall. Beyond the Plaza can be found the Shepherd Square Medical Center which can be reached by driving further East. This main entranceway is called Aloha Drive which is divided East and West by Kalani Drive. Also, located in this Eastern Zone are the offices for the Purcell Corporation, the Diamondhead Realty Office and the Diamondhead Inn.

The Western Commercial Zone is approached by turning left on West Aloha Drive from the Interstate at the 4-way Stop intersection. Century 21 and the BP Gas Station are at adjacent corners. Turning right at Gex Road leads to two westward commercial arteries, Park Ten Drive and Leisure Time Drive. Down Park Ten Drive is the Bowling Alley and the Sewerage and Water office, construction and auto services, and a number of other stores. Along Leisure Time Drive is the Nautilus center, the Postal Unit, Storage facilities, Sal's Runway, and a number of other stores and services which are opening at a serious frequency. The Days Inn Motel is accessed at the Interchange Service Road in addition to a few other businesses.

South of Interstate Ten is the Texaco Station, a Grill and a Hardware Store. South at the Circle at Airport Drive are several Marine and Service outlets. By continuing westward the Airport and supporting Hangars will be found. Directly South is the Yacht Club, Marina, and Ship's Store. Eastward is the proposed Casino World.

The following listings of Merchants and Services comprise a growing assemblage of commercialism in meeting the needs of the growing community. Some of the businesses have multiple listings since they were grouped by service categories.

Diamondhead Merchants and Services

Name	Address	Tel 255-	Date Opened
Food and/or Dining			
Big "K" Food Store	107 NE Interchange	5541	1991
Burger King	5400 W Aloha Dr	8522	1995
Chevron/Blimpies	100 NE Interchange	8030	1993
Chocolate Delight	4404 Aloha Dr	9008	1986
Dairy Queen	105 NW Interchange	3358	1986
D'head Country Club	Golf Club Drive		
D'head Days Inn	103 Live Oak Dr	1300	1991
D'head Supermarket	4402 E Aloha Dr	3430	1985
Diamondhead Yacht Club	3410 Yacht Club Cr	2925	1973
Dragon House of Hunan	4402 E Aloha Dr	1833	1993
Hinky Dink	4406 W Aloha Dr	3965	1972
Lagniappe Orleans	4300 Aloha Dr	6523	1995
Park Ten Lanes	4318 Park Ten Dr	9973	1995
Plaza Wines/Liquors	4402 E Aloha Dr #14A	4031	1985
R D's Lounge/Restaurant	100 Live Oak Dr	2827	1994
Sal's Runway Cafe	3039 Leisure Time Dr #A	2810	1994
Ship's Store	Yacht Club Marina	7055	1973
Waffle House	90 NE Interchange	5122	1995
Personal Care and Grooming			
Avon Products	6816 Aumoae Ct	4319	
Beauti-Control Cosmetics	8716 Manini Way	5585	
Carl's Hairworks	4402 W Aloha Dr	4191	1987
D'head Discount Drugs	4402 E Aloha Dr	7343	1989
Hair Now, Beauty Salon	4402 E Aloha Dr	3353	1994
Just Judy's	4410 W Aloha Dr	3605	1993
L L Ltd, Clothing	4402 E Aloha Dr	2606	1981
Mary Kay Cosmetics	88126 Kipapa Way	3753	
Nautilus Plus	2 Leisure Time Dr	5994	1990
Pazazz Salon	3039 Leisure Time Dr #D	8081	1995
Southern Charm	4402 E Aloha Dr #6	1840	1982
Southern Child	4402 E Aloha Dr #6	1840	1992
Sports Locker	4402 E Aloha Dr #14A	3102	1992
Windshear Barber Shop	3039 Leisure Time Dr #B	6781	1994

Diamondhead Merchants and Services

Name	Address	Tel 255-	Date Opened
House and Home			
Classic Interiors	100 NW Interchange	4225	1988
Corporate Cheer, Gift's	12A Leisure Time Dr	1086	1991
Creative Interiors, Inc.	3039 Leisure Time Dr	8555	1995
Danko Glass	3187 Leisure Time Dr	2562	1994
D'head Ace Hardware	443 Yacht Club Dr	3469	1985
D'head Dry Clean/Laundr	4402 E Aloha Dr #7	1840	1983
D'head Florist & Gifts	4405 W Aloha Dr	9888	1993
D'head Millworks/Supply	4319 B Park Ten Dr	5024	1992
D'head Storage	3300 Yacht Club Cr	2098	1990
D'head TV Cable	2 Leisure Time Dr	3381	1992
D'head Water/Sewerage	4351 Park Ten Dr	5813	1992
Dictograph Security Sys.	104209 Bayou Dr	3961	
Heirlooms, Antiques	3039 Leisure Dr, Ste E	8222	1995
Interior & Bldg Spec'lties	4402 E Aloha Dr	1769	1991
Interiors by Faith	7314 Ahi Dr	9884	
K & S Greenery	15 Leisure Time Dr	7261	1990
Lai Lani Florist	15 Leisure Time Dr	7261	1994
Structural Creations	4 Fox Trot	9487	
Super Video	4402 E Aloha Dr	5130	1994
The Hangar Gallery	3039 Leisure Time Dr #C	8004	1994
Medical and Dental			
D. Hoda Chiropractic	4349 Gex Dr	5328	1995
D'head Animal Hospital	101 Live Oak Dr #D	1414	1986
D'head Dental Clinic	5404 Indian Hill	2543	1993
D'head Discount Drugs	4402 E Aloha Dr	7343	1989
D'head Family Medicine	5435 Gex Dr	4300	1994
D'head Optical Eye Clinic	4410 W. Aloha Dr	8585	
Mark McFarland, DDS	4349 Gex Dr	6657	1993
Rehab Associates, Inc.	4550 Shepherd Square	1729	1988
Whole Family Health	4410 W Aloha Dr #B	8121	1993
Woodland VLG Nursing	5427 Gex Road	4832	1992

Diamondhead Merchants and Services

Name	Address	Tel 255-	Date Opened
Auto and Boat and Air			
BP Auto/Food Mart	101 NW Interchange		
Chevron/Blimpies	100 NE Interchange	8030	1993
Club Car Golf Carts	7918 Maui Pl	1657	
Coastal Precision Machine	3300 Yacht Club Dr #B	4090	1993
D'head Air Port	Airport Dr		
D'head Auto Center	15 Leisure Time Dr	9110	1994
D'head Car Wash/Detail		7224	
D'head Golf Carts	16890 Kapalama Dr	9588	
D'head Marine Service	3300 Yacht Club Cr	8935	1995
D'head Quick Lube	4321 Park Ten Dr	2001	1994
D'head Ship Store	3400 Yacht Club Cr	7055	1973
D'head Storage	3300 Yacht Club Cr	2098	1990
D'head Texaco	443 B Yacht Club Dr	4811	1990
Hinky Dink/Phillips 66	4406 W Aloha Dr	3965	1972
J/M Fast Lube	W Aloha Dr		
Mike & Jerry's Car Centr	W Aloha Dr		1995
Percy's D'head Marine Sv	3300 Yacht Club Cr	9705	
Accounting/Finance/Legal			
Bridge's Mortgage	4402 E Aloha Dr	9211	1991
Hancock Bank	4401 Kalani Dr	2660	1979
Jordan Assoc, Financial	6631 Ahekolo Cr	4458	
Merchants Bank	4402 Kalani Dr	6040	1992
Moore & Powell, CPA	105-D NW Interchange	3883	1985
Necaise, David M., Atty	4410 W Aloha Dr	5766	
Peoples Bank	4408 W Aloha Dr	4450	1992
Rod Johnson, Sr., Atty	5400 Indian Hill	2030	1993
Walters, N. Income Tax	6655 Golf Club Dr	1099	

Diamondhead Merchants and Services

Name	Address	Tel 255-	Date Opened
Realtors/Renters/Builders/Developers			
Bob Saucier Realty	105A NW Interchange	3060	1994
Bradford Homes	100 NW Interchange	7540	1984
Buford Electric Services	5514 Aila St	3416	
Century 21 Realty	100 NW Interchange	3550	1986
Coast Delta Realty	5400 Indian Hill	9188	1984
Diamondhead Realty	4401 E Aloha Dr	9464	1969
Duke, Levy & Asso.,	4404 W Aloha Dr #B	5595	1991
James Dollar & Co	4319 Park Ten Dr	7712	1979
Jon E. Ritten & Co.	5400 Indian Hill	9188	
LRM Homes	16820 Kapalama Dr	9000	
Latter & Blum Realty	4410 W Aloha Dr	9191	1992
Northgate Lumber Co.	16820 Kapalama Dr	9000	
Purcell Co., Inc.	4401 E Aloha Dr	7773	1969
Rex Land, Inc.	5400 Indian Hill	9188	
Sell & Save Disc't Realty	67155 D'head Dr East	6535	
Shepherd Square	Shepherd Square		
Wood Flooring Co	9943 Ana Hula St	5275	
Motels and Condos and Storage Rentals			
Century 21 Realty	100 NW Interchange	3550	1986
D'head Days Inn Motel	103 Live Oak Dr	1300	1991
D'head Storage	3300 Yacht Club Cr	2098	1990
D'head Mini Storage	Leisure Time Dr	452-3941	
Lanai Condo Rentals	6650 Golf Club Dr	3600	
Entertainment			
Country Club	Golf Club Dr	2919	
Dance Company, The	Park Ten Dr	6155	1995
Golf Pro	Country Club	2913	
Park Ten Bowling Lanes	4318 Park Ten Dr	9973	1995
Pro Shop	Country Club	2912	
Tennis World	Noma Drive	5030	
Yacht Club	Yacht Club Dr	2925	

Diamondhead Merchants and Services

Name	Address	Tel 255-	Date Opened
Business Services			
Conner Cain Travel	4402 E Aloha Dr #8	3000	1990
Corporate Cheer, Gifts	12A Leisure Time Dr	1086	1991
D'head Post Office	4401 W. Aloha Dr	2598	1993
D'head Prop Owners Asso	5300 Diamondhead Cr	1900	1984
Miss. Office Supply	12-A Leisure Time Dr	6639	1993
Staz Computer Software	11-A Leisure Time Dr	7085	1992
We Can Do That! Service	4401 W Aloha Dr	2598	1993
Schools and Day Care			
Almost Home	6812 Awini St	6989	
Dance Company, The	Park Ten Dr	6155	1995
D'head Academy	88360 D'Head Dr East	1784	
D'head Little School	Diamondhead Cr	7751	

Diamondhead Church Services

Name	Address	Telephone
Churches		
Annunciation Catholic Church	Kiln-DeLisle Rd	255-1800
D'head Baptist Church	63780 D'head Dr	255-3348
D'head Community Church	5301 D'head Cr	255-5556
D'head Hebrew Congregation	Community Center	255-1747
D'head United Methodist	Community Center	255-6100
Discipleship Baptist Church	D'head Academy	255-5453
Faith Assembly of God	Hwy 43, Kiln	255-2567
Gulf Coast Unitarian Fellowship	Community Center	863-5928
Harvest Time Church	Kiln-DeLisle Rd	255-2097
St. Thomas Episcopal	5303 D'head Cr	255-9213
St. William Catholic Church	Ladner Road	255-1294

The Spiritual Call

In light of the interest by the Diamondhead community in participating in Houses of Worship, the following responses are printed as a result of a mailed request.

Praise and Worship at Catholic Celebrations.

"Annunciation Catholic Church and Parish wishes to take this opportunity to congratulate the Diamondhead Community on this, your 25th Anniversary. Many of our congregation remember when there was no such place as Diamondhead and reminisce about their days spent in that area, then sparsely inhabited and heavily overgrown. Today it is such a different place, now comprising a high percentage of our congregation at each of our three Masses on week-ends and also our daily Mass services.

Annunciation Catholic Church
Henry McInerney, Pastor
255-1800

We wish to take this opportunity to congratulate and thank our Diamondhead parishioners for their support and involvement in this parish. They have certainly added to the vitality of this community and we look forward to the growth of this entire community and to your continued involvement in the spiritual life of all those who make up Annunciation Parish.

May God bless you on this occasion and continue to bestow his countless blessings on all of us as we journey together in the years ahead."

Henry McInerney, Pastor

Welcome to Baptist Services.

"Diamondhead Baptist Church is a caring and diverse family of Christians united in love and acknowledging the risen Christ as the Son of God, Lord and Savior. We recognize the Holy Bible as the only true word of God. Believing ourselves to be enlightened and guided by the Holy Spirit through Bible study and prayer. The primary goal of the church is to provide a full format of New Testament ministries to the residents of the immediate area, including worship, Bible study classes, prayer ministry, recreation, fellowship activities, week-day child development program for children between the ages of eight weeks and

Diamondhead Baptist Church
Fred Womack, Pastor
255-3348

eleven years. Our church, in cooperation with the Southern Baptist Convention, supports missions in 132 countries of the world.

A warm welcome is extended to all Christians, as well as any seeking to know God better or to be helped by His mercy."

Fred Womack, Pastor

Invitation to Presbyterian and Non denominational Celebrations.

"Diamondhead Community Church has been an important part of this community in a number of ways for many years.

Some of the early residents who became founders of our congregation wanted a "community" church, by which they meant a church that would extend a gracious welcome to people from a wide range of denominational affiliations. Though the Diamondhead Community Church is a member of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), it has developed forms of worship and engaged in community involvement which make the word "*community*" in our name a meaningful expression of whom we are.

Diamondhead Community Church
Paul H. Richards, Minister
255-5556

In recent years we have received persons into our membership who had come from at least ten different denominational backgrounds. We delight in our diversity, while also honoring our common allegiance to the God made visible in Old Testament and New and seen most clearly in Jesus Christ.

If you are not affiliated with a local congregation, we invite you to visit and worship with us. Our doors are open and our hands are extended in gracious welcome."

Paul H. Richards

Welcome to Hebrew Instructions.

"The Diamondhead Hebrew Congregation is an outgrowth of an "*Old Testament*" study class lead by the late Norman Pailet. Mr. Pailet lived in Israel many years, fought in the Israeli War of Independence, and was a true student of the Bible. The study group began in 1986. These Thursday night study groups were later changed to the Jewish Sabbath, Friday. We combined the Reformed Jewish services with a Biblical Study. Since Norman Pailet's death, our lay leader has been Jerry Reshew. Our services at 5:30 p.m. each Friday take place in the Bridge Room of the Community Center. Although the group is not large, the quality equals many more rigid congregations. Discussion is

Diamondhead Hebrew Congregation
Lois Abrams
255-1747

our key word and we all feel as if we are blessed by being able to add this dimension to our Diamondhead week."

Lois Abrams

Invitation to Episcopalian Services.

"St. Thomas Episcopal Church is a fellowship of Christians of the Anglican Communion throughout the world. We believe the church is the Body of which Jesus Christ is the Head and of which all baptized persons are members. We welcome all persons into our fellowship where we celebrate the Good New of Jesus Christ.

We claim to be both Catholic - that is, true to the historic Christian faith - and Protestant - that is, reformed and evangelical. Our central act of worship is the Holy Eucharist, also known as the Lord's Supper. We have many other opportunities for worship and fellowship during the year.

We are a parish of people of all ages, experiences, and backgrounds. We promise you a warm welcome and opportunities to enrich your spiritual and social life."

St. Thomas Episcopal Church
Reverend Linda L. Lowry
255-9213

The Reverend Linda L. Lowry

The Legends

Diamondhead residents continue to demonstrate their persistence and dedication to the Community. The early pioneers have a proven record of longevity. Many of whom, first established a base in Diamondhead by purchasing a condominium. Within a short period thereafter, they built permanent homes and many have even made significant improvements to their dwellings.

It doesn't go unnoticed that the POA Team of Personnel also have an enduring longevity. Sybil Paul at the Administration's front office, Joe Salvatore heading the Architectural controls, Hilton Fontenot in land Surveys, Brenda Graybeal at the Country Club, June at the Tiki Lounge, Ken Greaves at the Cart Barn, Clay Guidroz with

Tee Time, Bob Calvey at the Marina, and Paul Montjoy at the helm of the ship. Most of these persons have been part of the human infrastructure that has helped tend to the service and support that gives the quality lifestyle that flourishes.

The Security Force and the Fire Department also have an ongoing continuation of years. Such permanence of service and dedication are truly astonishing. This enduring spirit is even engendered in the *Legend* of Shorty Twillie. Shorty has been in Ground Maintenance for 22 years. He remembers the first houses going up. "There are houses everywhere now, it's gonna be a city," exclaimed Shorty. "I use to ice up all the fish that was caught during the Annual Fishing Rodeo!, There were people all over the Marina grounds when the boats started coming in," Shorty professed. On asking him as to why he is called *Shorty the Legend*, he replied, "Cause I pick up every piece of paper that is laying about and trash it!"

Fortunately, there are a lot of *Legends* around because Diamondhead is always immaculately clean. Diamondhead employees as well as the citizens are truly proud of their Community and take the extra mile and the extra smile to keep the environment litter-free.

"Cause I pick up every piece of paper that is laying about and trashit!", states *Shorty the Legend.* Below is the Fishing RoDeo of 1976 for the Kideos with Russell Mayeur monitoring son Kerry's baiting.

The Women

This Commemorative History would be most incomplete without a special tribute being made to the Ladies of Diamondhead. An understatement perhaps, but in every decision and every organizational endeavor and in every aspect of guidance, the men readily agree that their mate, partner, and sweetheart offered much more than just ardent devotion. The first pioneers and the ones who followed, all had their say in the building of the schools, erecting the churches, raising funds for the Volunteer Fire Department, pursuing community services, decorating the homes and the pageants and the parades. The first newsletters and short historical articles were developed by the Ladies of Diamondhead. Whether it was selling candies, cookies, cookbooks, or tickets, the enthusiasm is put forth with a smile and a charge to raise community standards. It is the Ladies of Diamondhead that present dignity and who grace the arms of the gentlemen Kings of Diamondhead's Mardi Gras festivities. And it is the Ladies of

Diamondhead that promote the welfare of their spouses as loyal and devoted CareGivers in times of sickness and needed comfort. It is also the Ladies who look after their neighbors' homes while the owners are away and by even watering the gardens or taking in the pets.

As the age group of the newcomers gets younger, many of the new ladies are mothers and employees who quickly are filling the ranks of the new volunteers in continuing the efforts of those who pass on the baton. The Youth Organization and the Kid's Theatre and Scouting and Arts and Crafts Festivals are being re-stimulated by the new Mothers and the new CareGivers. And they are being welcomed by those who have given many years of themselves in worthy endeavor for the benefit and tribute to the Diamondhead Community.

Seated: Brierly Acker, Gerry Barberg, xxxx, Gert Waddington
Standing: Jean Keen, xxxx, Betty Clagett, Ann Neff, and xxxx.

Not without note, are the Spectaculars put on by the Diamondhead Women's Club. Supporting numerous charities, one of their favorites is Hope Haven Children's Shelter. *The 1995 Tribute to Talented Women and a Few Good Men* resounded with applause and praises. The Ladies promoted an astounding week-end of entertainment filled with stage performances and song and dance routines. Some were contrived lip-sync while others brought their own talents to display. Under the direction of Impresarios Marilyn Cuccia and Ruth Moran, the musical cadence and panorama of gifted ladies can only be expressed as impressive and heart-warming. During one production, a gentleman from the audience uttered, "Can you imagine?, they're all over 60!"

The *few good men* were also sensational as well as good sports. Gus Gustafson and Russ Syverson were each champs in their several roles and portrayals while winning thunderous accolades from the enthusiastic audience. Young Ryan Chotto and Dustin with ShoBiz and Lion King were an electrifying delight.

But, back to the Ladies. The evening's entertainment included soulful Lou Lamendola, naughty Dot Hoskins, sassy Charlotte Reshew, shocking Trina Keel, and all the effervescent gals who danced and made the occasion so spirited. These included Shirley Schaffer, Sharon Capdau, Mary Hayes, Lorna Decker, Pat Stafford, Elaine Smith, Marge Edwards, Evelyn Kibler, Kathy Wood, Wanda Engleke, Patti Price, Ruth Rhodes, Sara Caliva, Pam Wegener, Lola Mullinix, Betsy Nolan, Christa Sigut, Rose Rita Cuccia, Betty Cole, Jinky Underwood, Diane Calhoun, and E.J.

An unforgettable, very talented and gracious young feme is Leila Gargoum who at 14 years displays a beautiful voice and enthralling magnetism. Singing since she was seven and having performed with Dennis Assaf's Performing Arts, she may very well one day be an Opera Star as she envisions her future.

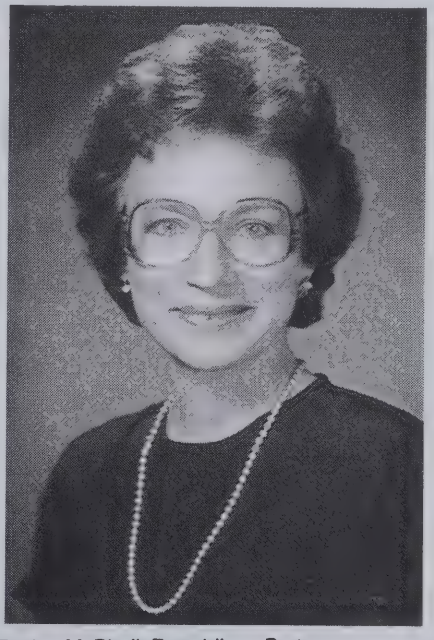
It is through such performances as these that brings the Diamondhead community together. Any of the citizenry who missed the performance can make up for it by purchasing their tickets in advance. It's a sure Winner!

There are many, many individual women who should be signalled out, but one of the Ladies of Diamondhead who has reached public acclaim and continues to reside in Diamondhead even though her current post takes her away, is Evelyn Mc Phail, *Grand Lady of the GOP.*

Evelyn McPhail, the new Republican National Committee co-chairman rose from the fledgling ranks of her party with roots well planted in Diamondhead growth and prosperity. Active in campaigning and party politics since 1975, she started as Director of Community Services for the Diamondhead Corporation in 1971 and continued through 1978. Evelyn became a member of the Republican Executive State Committee in 1979 and succeeded in becoming Chairman and Executive Director of the Mississippi Republican Party in 1987. Fellow Mississippian and chairman of the National Republican Party, Haley Barbour congratulated her for her ability to get the job done. "She understands effective organization work and she teaches it very well," he said. [3]

Evelyn remains a permanent resident of Diamondhead and proudly proclaims so whenever asked by the media. She also serves on the board of the Palmer Home for Children orphanage in Columbus, Mississippi. She had been raised there from the age of two.

First event for Cancer Fund Raiser with Patrons donating $300. Missy Marshall, Lorraine Heier, Lorraine Pailet and Gisela Rainey attending.



Evelyn McPhail, Republican Party National Committee Co-Chairman

[3] *"Sun Herald, March 15, 1995"*

Just Ducky

A profound legion of ducks waddle across the meridian to the Duck Pond along with a gaggle of Geese, Ganders and Goslings. This army of fowl have à long history back to the seventies when the man-made pool had been scooped out along the main entrance to Diamondhead. The original flock began with six mallards brought in by the Purcell Corporation. In time, some of the residents decided to further add to the charm by supplementing the pastoral collection. During the early '80s, their number had increased to a point of community concern. The pond was becoming greatly reduced of its vegetation to keep the fowl healthy. Immediate aid arrived by way of Howard Hamilton of the Diamondhead Super Store. He provided an on-going, free supply of corn to the growing population and Holcolm Hector equipped several feeders. Not the least to be left out, however, were Diamondhead's little people . . . the Cub Scouts, the Brownies, and the Little School took on the chores of daily feeding.

Needless-to-say, the colony had increased such, so that the flock had to be depopulated. With the depletion of the pond's natural vegetation and vital duck weed, the gallinaceous birds started pecking and picking at each other. By mid-85, a special round-up was mandated. An up-state couple volunteered to resettle those they could capture and took them to their country estate. They proceeded to make a duck arrest as they rustled, hustled and muscled the excess fowl to the satisfaction of all concerned.

Issue of Governance

Diamondhead is a private community. All of the Diamondhead facilities and amenities within the community are owned by, and are the use of, the property owners and their guests. Each property owner pays monthly assessments for each parcel owned to defer the cost of operation of the Association. The dues entitle the owners to reduced

fees at the clubs and recreational facilities. All roads, sewer lines, water lines, electrical, telephone and cable are installed and are ready for hookup.

"The Property Owners Association is managed by an unpaid Board of Directors who are charged with governing a paid staff under the direction of a General Manager. The operating budget is a $5,000,000 per year. Books are audited annually by an outside Accounting firm. The Property Owners Association holds legal title to all common property and amenities. Property Owners Association assets are protected by statutory insurance in addition to a $5,000,000 general liability policy plus an agreed valued property policy which allows for asset replacement with in kind useful facilities [providing that there is no depreciation loss]". [4]

The Diamondhead POA Board of Directors are voted by the members for a two year term. Diamondhead voting rights come with property ownership. Day to day operations are performed by a General Manager and staff.

Diamondhead members elect a Board of Directors, with each member serving a two year term. The Board overseas operation of Diamondhead through a General Manager, who supervises the day-to-day operations. Diamondhead also falls under the jurisdiction of the Hancock County Board of Supervisors.

Only Diamondhead Property Owners can be members of the Diamondhead Country Club and amenities. Membership is automatic when Diamondhead property is purchased, and is not optional. Guests must have a member as a sponsor, or must be a short/long-term renter in Diamondhead. Membership is given to the owners of each parcel of property. With family ownership, membership rights are given to husband, wife, and any dependent children under the age of 21. With regard to corporate or partnership property, two membership cards are issued. Diamondhead voting rights come with property ownership.

Property Owners Association
1994-95 Board of Directors are: Jim Van Norman, President; Brierly Acker, Mary Sinders, Judith Stahl, Charles Butler, Paul Guichet, Al Cronvich, Ken Kipping, George Cassis, James Hourin, and Pete Casano.

The Property Owners Association has the authority through its restrictive covenants to place liens on delinquent properties in order to collect fees and assessments levied. The POA is also charged through its *Takeover Agreement* with the Purcell Corporation to continue improvements to the road and drainage systems in Diamondhead.

"Diamondhead amenities valued at $20,000,000.00 was deeded to the POA in 1985 as dictated by the terms of the *Takeover Agreement* between Purcell Corporation and the Diamondhead POA." [5]

The Diamondhead Architectural Committee controls all Home Building as stipulated by the restrictive covenants on all lots. Of special note are setback restrictions which reduce the density of housing. Since most homes are relatively new, the contractors have all adhered to the Southern Standard Building Code which makes

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[4] *" Diamondhead Community Infrastructure, p. 4 "*
[5] *"Interview with Holcomb Hector, March 3, 1995"*

Diamondhead most unique. The Diamondhead community sustains a spacing program between housing thereby affording a significant green space area which helps fire protection, drainage and the overall aesthetics of the community.

An Evolving Metropolis

The "*City of Diamondhead*" already has its elected officials with Mayor-Elect Ed Dabler and a full score of aldermen and city officials.

Property owners went to the polls during the Summer of '94 to perform the first step in an attempt to establish municipal incorporation of Diamondhead. On Saturday, December 9, 1994 the registered citizens were asked to elect a new governing board consisting of a mayor, aldermen, a police chief and a city clerk as a first step. Approximately 200 citizens of the approximate 2000 registered voters turned out to select a slate of officials before the resolution to pursuing a governing municipality. Even though the result is much like a straw vote, the selection for the first Mayor, was Ed Dabler; the first Police Chief, Leon Carrington; and the first City Clerk, Dick Hopkins. The City Aldermen are: Hilda Bourg, Bob Gorman, Tom McCoy, Benny Mistretta, and Herman Zeringue. These are the interim officials who will serve, if and when a "*City of Diamondhead*" materializes. If the Municipality becomes a reality, then another election is scheduled for 1997 to form a continuing governing authority.

However, yet to be accomplished and most essential, is the circulation of a petition for incorporation. George Scrugham volunteered to coordinate the petition signing activities. Mississippi requires that the prospective municipality must have the approval of two thirds of its registered voters. Upon the success of the required quorum, application may then be tendered to a Hancock County Chancery Court for a Judicial decree.

City of Diamondhead, Officials-Elect
Ed Dabler, Mayor-elect; Leon Carrington, Police Chief-elect; Dick Hopkins, City Clerk-elect. The City Aldermen-elect, are: Hilda Bourg, Bob Gorman, Tom McCoy, Benny Mistretta, and Herman Zeringue.

Both, the Property Owner's Association and the Diamondhead Community Association have taken neutral positions, thereby allowing the voting residents to decide for themselves. Regardless, the positive outcome will probably stimulate more of the approximate 5000 residents to become registered voters who number approximately 2750 at this time.

Mayor-Elect Ed Dabler was drafted for his candidacy due to his qualifications of having worked for nearly five years with the

Diamondhead Water and Sewerage District and his professioanal involvement with municipal infrastructures in Missouri. His emphasis in favor with Diamondhead becoming a City among other things would be on the critical aspect of controling Planning and Zoning within the area. As Chairman of the Water and Sewer District he will be completing his first five year commission appointment making him the longest serving public official in Diamondhead. [6]

Facing the Next Generation

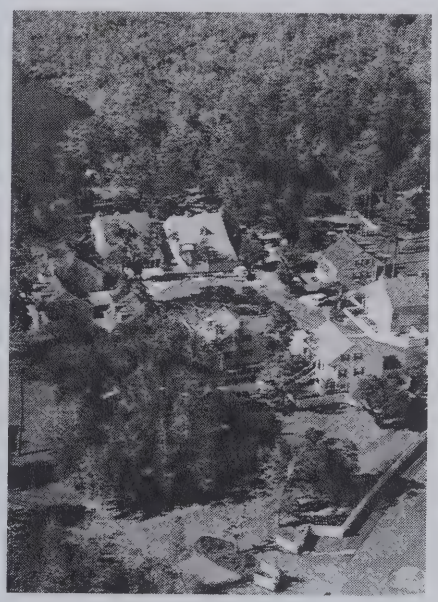
Diamondhead has a population of approximately 5,250 people and is the fastest growing community in southern Mississippi. In just 8 years the population has doubled. Housing starts have averaged approximately 125 new homes per year for the past five years. Restrictive covenants protect the community's integrity. The community is home to young families as well as retirees. The backgrounds of its residents are as diverse as anywhere in the country. The median family income, according to a recent survey, is over $52,000. [7]

Diamondhead boasts ten square miles, or 6,400 acres of heavily wooded, rolling land that rises from sea level at the Bay of St. Louis to over 100 feet above sea level in several locations. Diamondhead is one of the highest points of land adjacent to salt water from Texas throughout the Gulf Coast and all the way around Florida. [8]

Diamondhead is served by its own interchange on I-10. The primary development is north of the interstate with some development south of the interstate currently developed on a dredged canal protected from the bay by approximately 1,200 acres of marshlands.

The population growth of Diamondhead from its inception in 1970 until 1980 had not been dramatic. However, the last several years have experienced spectacular growth. There was a prior period in development when the volume of available lots were so excessive, that

The community sustains a green space program which helps in fire protection, drainage, and contributes to the areas the beautiful aesthetics.



The exquisite homesites at Devil's Elbow along the *Baneeshewah*, now called Rotten Bayou, form their own private enclave within Diamondhead.

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[6] *"Interview with Ed Dabler, July 28, 1995"*

[7] *"Diamondhead, Mississippi, p. 2"*

[8] *"Diamondhead, Mississippi, p. 1"*

land sales were performing well, however at very low prices. Such opportunities are very rare today because of the growth and the popularity of the area.

Aspects of Gaming

In January of 1993, Charles "Kip" Reddien, president of Mississippi Gaming Corporation filed application for permission to construct a marine/dockside gaming facility. The formal application requested that a Casino license be issued for the Diamondhead area located south of I-10 Interchange. The filing announcement described a huge casino resort complete with hotel, marina, golf course and sports arena. The parent corporation, Europa Cruises Corporation, operated gaming ships which cruised out of Biloxi and Gulfport in the late 1980s.

In June of 1993 Europa purchased from the Purcell Corporation, 404.5 acres for $4 million dollars. The property is located between North Bay St. Louis and south of I-10 in Hancock County and extends near the Harrison County line. The property will be developed by Casino World, Inc., through a subsidiary of Mississippi Gaming Corporation. Both are owned by Europa.

Casino World, Inc. is locally headed by Charles "Kip" Reddien, Chairman and Chief Executive Officer. He has had a busy schedule wading through all of the required petitions for gaining permissions and permits from the various agencies.

In November of 1994, the Diamondhead Water and Sewer District approved Casino World for water and sewer tie-in and the site plan was approved by the Hancock County Planning Commision and the Hancock County Board of Supervisors.

In June of 1995, Casino World was granted site approval from the Mississippi Gaming Association which allows them to proceed with obtaining the necessary permits to develop the casino resort.

Everything seems to be moving as scheduled following numerous in-house studies of the area including traffic and signalling controls of the I-10 Exit, a significant buffering area protecting the Yacht Club and Marina as well as the Townhouse Condos and private slips.

Diamondhead Casino Resort has had its engineering and environmental contractors assemble a magnificent site planning design for a magnificent recreational, sporting and gaming resort community. The two mile roadway will be extended from near the Yacht Club Circle to parallel south of I-10 to the far end of Hancock near the Harrison County line. Plans report a 9-Hole Executive Golf Course with an elegant Club House. A designated area is set aside for Recreational Vehicles and ample open parking. At its eastern border is a natural bayou where the 450 room, luxury, Hotel and raised parking garage will be located. Because the property has both Highlands and wetlands combined with marsh areas and free flowing bayous, it will develop a marine theme perhaps including the legends of pirates. The Master Site Plan even includes an Environmental Research Center. From the main artery will be a complex of bridges and roadways to include a bridge out to its Casino island with two 60,000 to 80,000 square foot, Casino barges moored on each side of a huge Gazebo. Traffic will be moved by trams and shuttles to give the gaming customers a panorama of tropical sights and delights.

Diamondhead Casino Resort
An executive estate enclave enclosed by estuaries, environmental balances and aquatic excellence. A Water World complete with Hotels, Golfing, Entertainment Sports Arena, Dining Rooms and Gaming Barges.

Heralding a New Future

Those persons who have been most effective in creating the design and the directions for change and growth of Diamondhead were asked to make some projections into the future. The following comments may be considered speculative or prophesy.

Jim Van Norman, President -- POA

"The population will triple in the next five years", Jim Van Norman.

Jim Van Norman and his wife, Dot, moved to Diamondhead in 1989, the same year he retired from the Human Resources department at the Mississippi Power Company in Gulfport. Since living in Diamondhead he has served on the Diamondhead Academy School Board, the Board of Directors of the Diamondhead Community Association, is a member of the Diamondhead Community Church, and is presently President of the Diamondhead Property Owners Association.

> *"Diamondhead has come full circle. From twenty-five years ago when it was thought of as a quiet planned retirement community to today with its school, shopping center, spa, restaurants, bowling center, doctors, clinics, youth recreational facilities such as baseball and soccer fields, and over 100 businesses serving 5,000 residents. It has become the fastest growing community on the Mississippi Gulf Coast and for good reason.*
>
> *Diamondhead offers all the amenities and security that people are looking for. I think that in the next five years the population will triple and the community will incorporate.".*
>
> Jim Van Norman

Paul Montjoy, General Manager -- POA

Paul Montjoy has brought a varied background of experience and professional training including engineering, accounting, commercial, residential waste disposal, and grounds maintenance. Paul had an early involvement with Diamondhead, having been its project manager with the Purcell Corporation during its first six years. In that position he had responsibility for all activities other than land and condominium

sales. This included the resort activities that exist today. In addition, he was responsible for the construction program and the operation of the sewer and water system. Most of the major amenities were created during his first administration including a building code enforcement program. Paul has always been an avid supporter of communicating with the residents and continues his commitment to the Diamondhead News, Recreation Department, and Youth Summer Camps.

"Ultimately, Diamondhead will have almost 9,000 platted lots . . . translating into approximately 5,000 more home sites", Paul Montjoy

Diamondhead is truly unique with its six thousand acres located on the interstate halfway between Mobile and New Orleans and on the highest piece of land obn water on the Gulf of Mexico. With the Bay on the South, the Jourdan River and the bayous to the West and North and low lying lands that would be extremely difficult to develop, if not impossible under wetland laws on the East, it is a virtual enclave. This enclave, with its basic infrastructure in place, secutity, sewerage, water, fire protection, roads, drainage, along with its protected covenants and the care and concern of its citizens, provides the opportunity to build the finest community anywhere. Ultimately, Diamondhead will have under 9,000 platted lots. These should translate into approximately 5,000 home sites and, at the current growth, Diamondhead should be near 80% built out within ten to twelve years, or before the year 2027.

History will record how well these opportunities were handled by the people of Diamondhead.

Paul Montjoy

Holcomb Hector, Project Manager and Vice President, Purcell Company, Inc.

In 1969, Holcomb Hector became the Project Manager for Purcell Co, Inc. (then Diamondhead Corporation), the original Developer of the Diamondhead Community. Over the past twenty - five years, Holcomb has been integrally involved in the development and growth of Diamondhead from the acquisition of 6000 acres of contiguous property and the initial concept of a deed restricted destination resort in Diamondhead's infancy to the dynamic self-contained residential community we now call Paradise. Holcomb was involved in all phases of construction of our water and sewer system, golf courses, tennis complex, yacht and country clubs, and all our other amenities including over 100 miles of streets. In addition to the oversight of construction of Diamondhead's infrastructure, Holcomb

"By the year 2020, Diamondhead will have tripled its current population", Holcomb Hector.

also has sen his Purcell Company construct over one thousand homes within the community over the past quarter century.

"At its present rate of growth, by the year 2020 Diamondhead will have tripled its current population, have an additional 30 miles of roadways, and numerous new professional and commercial facilities to accommodate our unprecedented residential growth."

Holcomb Hector

Peter Casano, Attorney at Law and Past President -- POA

As a member of the Diamondhead Community for 24 years, Mr. Casano has participated in many activities vital to the growth of Diamondhead. He served as president of the Harbor House Townhomes, as School Board member of the Diamondhead Academy, and as former President and current Board member of the POA.

"Municipal Incorporation will come with all the good and bad of it", Pete Casano.

Besides being an attorney, Mr. Casano has owned and operated various enterprises such as: sightseeing and transportation, hotel-motel, restaurant, marina, real-estate, and financial businesses.

"We are witnessing the transformation of a small private community. Growth in the next five years will be explosive. We will have a younger more active community with expanded interest. The future will bring municipal incorporation with all the good and bad that goes with it."

Peter J. Casano

E. George Cassis, Developer and Member of the Board -- POA

As a prominently retired businessman, Mr. Cassis maintains active interest in the Diamondhead Community. He is a member of the POA Board of Directors and is President of the School Board for Diamondhead Academy. He is an ardent participant in the welfare of the Episcopal Church and is one of the recipients of the *Citizen of the Year Award* as presented by the Diamondhead Community Association. Mr. Cassis has an on-going vision to make Shepherd Square a dynamic medical services complex.

"More youthful residents will be working in harmony with neighboring communities", George Cassis.

"By the year 2020 Diamondhead will be an incorporated city with a population of approximately 12,000 people. There will be enough diversity of business establishments in the commercial area to meet the needs

of this and adjoining communities.

Residents will generally be more youthful and actively working in harmony with neighboring communities on regional, social, environmental and economic affairs."

E. George Cassis

Edward Dabler, Chairman, Water and Sewer Distirct

A Civil Engineer and Consulting Engineer to Municipalities and Land Developers. Mr. Dabler purchased his first condo in 1970 and a larger one six years later. During the first years at Diamondhead the Dablers enjoyed taking one or two week vacations several times a year in their private *Resort Community Living*. Even though more and more people moved into the area, there were just a small number. "It became easy to come to know everyone in such a fraternal atmosphere at the Country Club and on the Golf Course," he reminisced. He and his wife, Travella established their retirement residency eight years ago. As Mayor Nominee, he will have a lot to say about the future of Diamondhead.

"Incorporation will be in response to residents wanting added services and better resource utilization", Ed Dabler.

The past 10 years has seen the number of single family homes increase to a point where the number of homes now far exceeds the number of condominiums and townhouses. This growth started slowly, but as new development came to the Mississippi Gulf Coast, Diamondhead began to grow rapidly. In 1994, over 200 new residences were built and occupied. The community has grown at a much more rapid pace than any of the older communities in the area. This growth has served to change the life style in Diamondhead from a resort/retirement community to one with people of all ages as could be expected of a maturing community.

I see Diamondhead becoming a city in the future. The move to incorporate the City of Diamondhead will be in response to pressure by the residents for added services and better utilization of the resources available to the residents as an incorporated community for people employed by the many businesses located in South Mississippi.

Edward Dabler

Diamondhead Annual Events

Diamondhead Sweetheart's Valentine Dance

As two hearts meet as one. The Diamondhead community celebrates their beginning of the year with a wonderful dance for lovers and sweethearts.

Diamondhead Mardi Gras

It's a seasonal fever which has to run its course. There is no cure for this fever as it starts up each year on January 6 and lasts until Ash Wednesday. It's Mardi Gras Madness and it infests residents and visitors alike. Following the New Orleans tradition of mad celebration prior to the penitent season of Lent, Mardi Gras (Fat Tuesday) is celebrated as avidly in Diamondhead as anywhere along the Coast. Actually, the first Mardi Gras was celebrated in Mobile in the early 1800's. In 1975, four Diamonhead families decorated golf carts and held their private Mardi Gras Carnival. In 1976, the first offical Parade was announced. The following year in 1977, 35 land units were formed and 11 boats made the Sea Parade heralding King Akua Kai (God of the Sea) and King Ali'i (Ruler of the Sea). Mardi Gras in Diamondhead has continued to flourish with two Krewes offering membership: the Land Krewe of Diamondhead and the Sea Krewe of

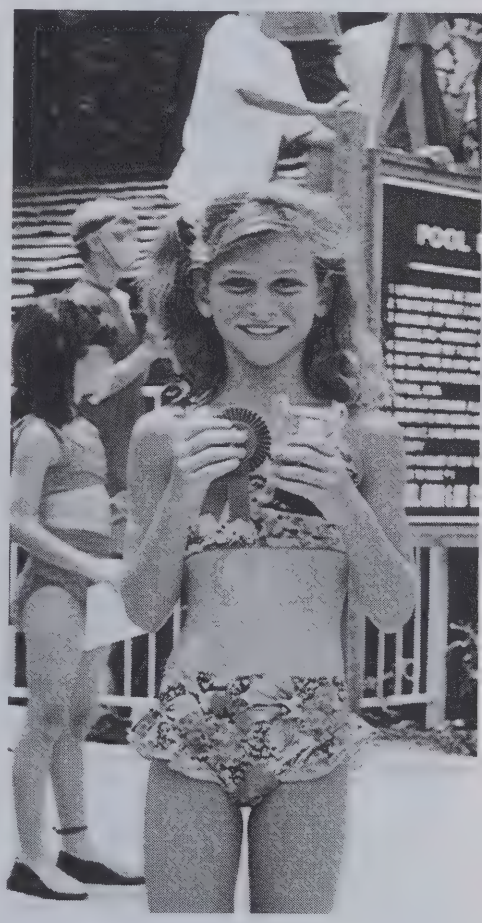
Kamehameha. Both Krewes elect from their membership a King and a Queen, to reign for the season. Numerous luncheons, cocktail parties, balls and the final parades highlight the season. The Land Parade greets the Boat Parade at the Yacht Club wherein the combined Royalty of the Krewes announce the official carnival celebrations. The spelling of "krewe" is derived from Milton's Paradise Lost reference to a *krewe of demons.* The Mystick Krewe of Comus used this theme in New Orleans since 1837.

Lee and Tom Fredian celebrate St. Pat's Day by taking it easy. Curtis Stout, Blanche Devine and Billie Jean Barger participate in the 1988 festivities.

Diamondhead Pilgrimage and Tour of Homes

Home tours and pilgrimages are traditional throughout the South during the months of April and May. Each year, five or six home owners and other community facilities open their doors and gardens for viewing by the public here in Diamondhead. The Country Club also opens its doors to all visitors for a special luncheon menu.

This event is sponsored by the Diamondhead Garden Club.



Little Miss Kelly Smith wins trophy in 1991 4th of July swim.

Diamondhead Fourth of July Fair

Held in the circle in front of the Country Club, this event offers fun for the whole family. Different booths for games and food are operated by the different clubs and associations as fun-raising events. Tug-of War between boaters and golfers, dunking booth, a jail, and mini-golf highlight the events, while the food booths offer everything from hot dogs to soft-shell crab. Pool side parties predominate with trophies to the winners of different categories.

Sponsored by the Diamondhead Community Association.

Miss Christine Seither champions her July winning trophy.

Diamondhead Health Fair

Held during the month of September, the Health Fair is sponsored by the Business and Professional Association, and is expected to become and annual event. The Fair offers Diamondhead residents convenient and free health screening, including blood pressure, hearing, vision, etc.

Diamondhead Arts and Crafts Show

Held in the circle in front of the Country Club, the Craft Show has become a notable annual event, held on the last Saturday of September. Sponsored by the Diamondhead Academy, over 150 artists and craftsmen now attend the Show to display and sell their works. Special food is provided by the Country Club.

Diamondhead Boaters Christmas Parade of Lights

The Yacht Club deck offers a fabulous view of Santa's night-time arrival at Diamondhead. With often as many as a dozen lighted and decorated boats escorting him, Santa brings gifts for the Diamondhead children. Moving slowly and majestically, the Christmas Festival of Lights Parade begins at the I-10 bridge, traveling along the Jourdan River into Cut-Off Bayou and up Paradise Bayou. Ending at the Diamondhead Marina Yacht Club, each judge tallies their scores in determining the winners of various categories. The Fairyland Parade begins at dusk reflecting many lights brilliantly playing upon the waters. The winners, as well as the losers, are toasted while live entertainment continues throughout the evening at the Yacht Club.

Throughout the Christmas season, decoration promotions and contests prevail along with Christmas carolling and well-wishing folks joining in Sing-along.

DPAS Magnolia Ball

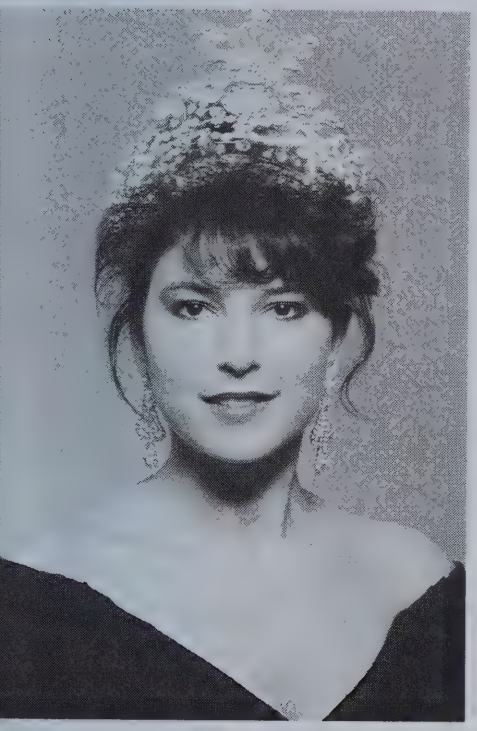
The Diamondhead Performing Arts Society features the Magnolia Ball which is one of the top events of the year.

Pageantry is displayed along with the gracious and charming beauty of our Southern Belles in recasting a past history of days gone by.

The year was incomplete if you didn't make the #1 dance.

New year's Eve at the Diamondhead Country Club

Hau'oli Makahiki Hou, yes, Happy New Year!

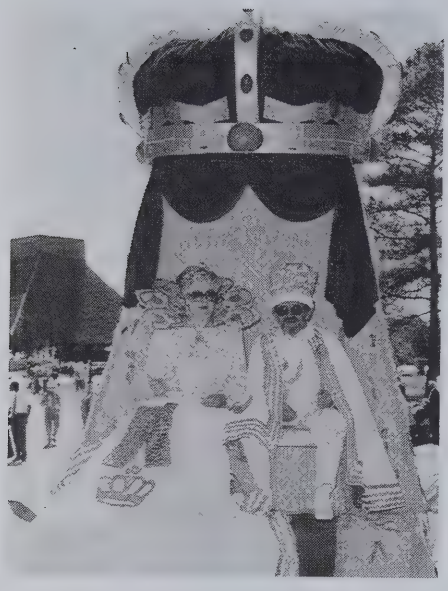


Beauty is —

(Left) Reigning beauty is revealed by Miss Schoen Heier in 1992's *Queen of Okeanos.*

(Right) Heather Wakefield easily captures *Miss Photogenic* in Fine Arts Festival of 1991.

Krewe of Diamondhead



1990 King Ali'i Honua XV Ronald Bankston and his Queen Linn Godard ride amid their reveling supporters.

1994 King Ali'i Honua XIX Bill Bahner and Queen Billie.

The Land Nobility

1976 *King Kolepa* the reigning King of Golf
Joe Salvatore and his Queen Char Hanson -- The First Reigning Royalty

Honorary Parade Marshall was New Orleans' most favorite pianist, Ronnie Kole, heralding in 7 beautifully decorated floats, 18 magnificently embellished golf carts, 5 walking clubs, 3 equestrian mounted groups, and a multitude of clowns aboard road bikes with a High School band in full regalia. Toasts were extolled to all Royalty including Miss Diamondhead who was beautiful damselle, Miss Kim Corales.

1977 King Ali'i Honua II
Wallace Little and his Queen, Syble Paul
1978 King Ali'i Honua III
Robert Phlugfelder and his Queen, Mary Hoppert
1979 King Ali'i Honua IV
Clyde Bonwell and his Queen, Sylvia Pross
1980 King Ali'i Honua V
Luther Grice and his Queen, Lee Fredian
1981 King Ali'i Honua VI
Al Doussan and his Queen, Alice Little
1982 King Ali'i Honua VII
Jack Boudreaux and his Queen, Cecile Grice
1983 King Ali'i Honua VIII
Tommy Heier and his Queen, Hilda Bourg
1984 King Ali'i Honua IX
Jerry Bourg and his Queen, Lorraine Heier
1985 King Ali'i Honua X
Vince Almerico, Sr. and his Queen, Ann Neff
1986 King Ali'i Honua XI
Tom Satterlee and his Queen, Laura Almerico
1987 King Ali'i Honua XII
Stanley Robert and his Queen, Maealys Swartzendruber

1988 King Ali'i Honua XIII
Charles Johnson, Sr. and his Queen, Elizabeth Claggett
1989 King Ali'i Honua XIV
Herb Larson and his Queen Dot Hoskins
1990 King Ali'i Honua XV
Ronald Bankston and his Queen, Linn Godard
1991 King Ali'i Honua XVI
Ted Godard and his Queen, Evelyn Kibler
1992 King Ali'i Honua XVII
Jerry Reshew and his Queen, Gertrude Wadington
1993 King Ali'i Honua XVIII
Paul Snemyr and his Queen, Gisela Rainey
1994 King Ali'i Honua XIX
Bill Bahner and his Queen, Billie Bahner
1995 King Ali'i Honua XX
Henry Kibler and his Queen, Lou Lamendola
1996 King Ali'i Honua XXI
Berlon Dennis and his Queen, Alice Burkhardt

1989 King Ali'i Honua XIV Herb Larson and his Queen, Dot Hoskins.

Festival of the World - Mardi Gras was the 1995 Ball Theme.
Legends of Old was the 1996 Ball Theme.

1993 King Ali'i Honua XVIII Paul Snemyr and his Queen, Gisela Rainey. The Spirit of Mardi Gras fills the air with merriment. (above)

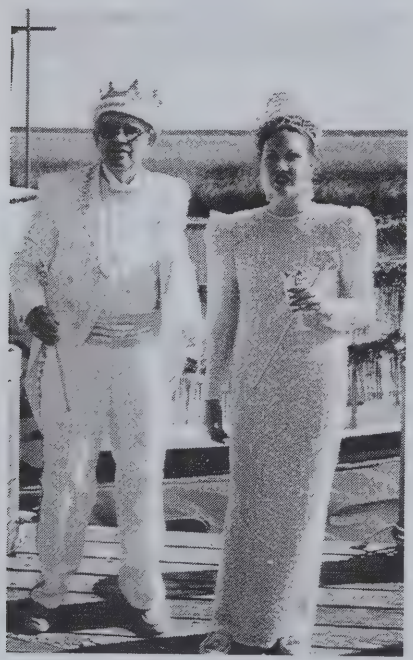
At left, an air of stateliness and courtly aristocracy exudes from King Akua Kai XVI R.B. Boatright as he toasts to the majesty of his Queen, Nina Cotton as they open the Court of 1990.

The Captain, Officers, King and Queen and their Royal Court celebrated the evening in grand style.

During its first year the reigning monarch was called *King Kolepa* for *King of Golf.* Thereafter, *Ali'i Honua* became the unchallenged, sovereign lineage meaning *The Ruler of the Land.* The officiate Captain of The Krewe of Diamondhead has been Benny Mistretta since 1981. The Krewe of Diamondhead had been a loose knit organization during its formative years and became incorporated in 1982 when Tommy Heier became its first chartered President.

Besides the annual membership meeting, the Krewe puts on annual fund raising and fun raisin' events such as a Crawfish Party, a Belmont Party, a Steak Party, a Country-Western Party, a Halloween Party, the Coronation Ball, the Mardi Gras Ball, and the Mardi Gras Parade.

Queen Evelyn Kibler and Ted Godard, King Ali'i Honua XVI reign over the Krewe of Diamondhead's Land Nobility during the year of 1991.



1992 King Akua Kai XVIII Bud Barnes and His Queen, M'lis Marshall, descend from their Royal Barge at the Yacht Club.

Krewe of Kamehameha

Boaters Association

1976 King Akua Kai I
Tom McMurry and his Queen, Blanche Devine
1977 King Akua Kai II
Leon Prima and his Queen, Bonnie Deters
1978 King Akua Kai III
Edward Snow and his Queen, Milly Rubin
1979 King Akua Kai IV
Joe Matranga and his Queen, Nell Koenenn
1980 King Akua Kai V
Harry Devine and his Queen, Ida Mae Snow
1981 King Akua Kai VI
J.C. Koenenn and his Queen, Gloria Barber
1982 King Akua Kai VII
Tom Ballard and his Queen, Pat Stafford
1983 King Akua Kai VIII
Lou Cotton and his Queen, Bernice Johnston
1984 King Akua Kai IX
Sam Daquanno and his Queen, Ruth Daquanno

1985 King Akua Kai X
Bud Freeman and his Queen, Mary Lou Freeman
1986 King Akua Kai XI
Robert Calvey and his Queen, Jean Keen
1987 King Akua Kai XII
Johnny Bargar and his Queen, Billie Jean Bargar
1988 King Akua Kai XIV
Ernest Barber and his Queen, Elisabeth McMurry
1989 King Akua Kai XV
Curtis Stout and his Queen, Gladys McCook
1990 King Akua Kai XVI
Roland Boatright and his Queen, Nina Cotton
1991 King Akua Kai XVII
Harvey Comfort and his Queen, Nell Dennis
1992 King Akua Kai XVIII
Bud Barnes and his Queen, M'lis Marshall
1993 King Akua Kai XIX
Robert Wood and his Queen, Lee Fredian
1994 King Akua Kai XX
Ted Szelag and his Queen, Gloria Gasper
1995 King Akua Kai XXI
Harold Turner and his Queen, Terri Downie
1996 King Akua Kai XXII
Jessie Morgan and his Queen, Kathy Wood

While the tune of *Pomp and Circumstance* played, the Royal entourage promenaded and ascended their thrones to receive the tributes customarily presented newly crowned monarchs. The Commodore confers the traditional engraved silver goblets as the Vice-Commodore tenders the radiant Royal Colors. The 1995 Boaters Association Mardi Gras was the last to celebrate at the Country Club which had been converted into international *Ports of Call*. The 1996 annual was held in the Grand Ballroom at the Biloxi Broadwater Hotel.

The portraits of the Kings and Queens of Akua Kai are hung at the Yacht Club upstairs entrance. Akua Kai translates to *God of the Sea*. A superstitious God, because the Boaters Association decided to eliminate Akua Kai XIII.

1993 King Robert Wood and Queen Lee Fredian toast the Winds and the Gods of the Seas.

1989 King Curtis Stout and his Queen, Gladys McCook perpetuate the reign of the Akua Kai's.

1995 Board of Directors
Tim Holt, Commodore
Kathy Wood, Vice Commodore
Pat Morgan, Treasurer
Bernice Turner, Secretary
R.B. Boatright
Stan Cremer
Frank Gasper

The Krewe of Kamehameha Annual Schedule

Coronation Ball at the Country Club, in January.
Gala Ladies' Luncheon to honor the current Queen of the Sea.
Mardi Gras Ball at the Country Club.
Costume Cocktail Party and Dance, Saturday before Mardi Gras

1995 Krewe of Kamehameha attending the gala Boaters Ball. Centered are His Majesty Akua Kai XXI Harold Turner and His Queen Terri Downie. Back Row standing from left to right are Gloria Barber, Bob Calvey, Bernice Turner, Pat Stafford, Lou Cotton, Nina Cotton, and Betty McMurry. Seated left to right are Tom McMurry, Blanche Devine, Ida Mae Snow, and Harrie Devine. Kneeling are Nell Dennis, R.B. Boatright, Lee Fredian, and Ed Snow.

The Ali'i is the Royal organization of past Kings comprising of two socials per year ruled by the most current King Akua Kai. The 1995 Rex-in-Charge is Bob Wood

The Board of Directors has four elected officers in addition to three at-large members and the past Commodore as ex-officio member.

Crew of Tiki 1993, Firstyear's King and Queen. Hugh Filson and Mary Hays celebrating their Mardi Gras Group's winning Best Over All award.

Crew of Tiki

1993 King Hugh Filson, and his Queen Mary Hays
1994 King Ed Smith, and his Queen Nell Seghers
1995 King Bill Vincent, and his Queen Nancy Creason

The Royalty is selected each year by a secret committee who meet in seclusion and once arriving at the chosen candidate, they proceed to the new monarch's dwelling. The new King is then

pronounced by the selection committee by having lei's tossed around his neck and upon his *castle*. In revelry all the members and the new King meet at the Tiki Lounge where the King chooses his Queen for the Day. The Crew then man their skirted Golf Carts to join in with the Krewe of Diamondhead Parade. By foot and by cart, they pay homage to their King and Queen.

This special Crew numbers fifty members who have their regular meetings at the Tiki Lounge each Friday during the hours of the *hors d'oeuvres*. Admittance is by paying $3.00 annual dues and displaying their personal *Beer Stein*. The Crew proclaimed the Tiki Bar as their designated Cinerarium in following their personal Steins to the final end. Prior to Mardi Gras, they strike their vote on what color the majestic Pine Cone will be for the year.

Crew of Tiki 1994, South Pacific Parade Group won Best Over All for second year. King Ed Smith and Queen Nell Seghers are centered with blue feathered masks and surrounded by Carousing Revelers.

Crew of Tiki 1995. King Bill Vincent and Queen Nancy Creason attired in their royal regalia with their leis displaying special Crew Favors - Pine Cones. (At Left)

The Stars

"And All that Jazz" --

Ambassador Ronnie Kole is a true All-Star. Everyone in Diamondhead has been affected by his involvement in the cultural and entertainment scenes which have abounded throughout the years since the early 1970s. Ronnie was Grand-marshall of the first Krewe of Diamondhead in 1976 and has been attendant to many festive events ever since.

Energetic, enthusiastic, vibrant, charismatic, and a suave gentleman are his personable traits. A further distinction is that Ronnie Kole is a Care Giving person. As a member of the board of Directors of The Easter Seal Society of Louisiana for more than a quarter century, he has also served as its President for two terms and has hosted the Annual Telethon since its inception in the mid-70's. Even though the Easter Seal program is his main charity, there is still plenty of Kole to get around to other charities, such as: United Way, The Boy's Club, The Lion's "Sight and Sound" Telethons, The National Dyslexia Foundation, the American Heart Association, Muscular Dystrophy Telethons, St. Jude Children's Hospital . . . Catholic Charities honored him at their 20th Annual Benefit with a sell-out soiree of more than a 1000 audience participants paying tribute to him as they had with celebrities before him; such as Bob Hope, Bing Crosby, Jerry Lewis and other entertainment magnets.

Always innovative, Ronnie cut a CD called "*Groupe Jazz*" which he calls his foot-tapping attraction. His "*Here's New Orleans*" Revue was first introduced at one of the Biloxi Casinos consisting of a fast paced Roots to Rapture scenario.

Ronnie has become New Orleans' and Louisiana's major Tourism promoter. Over the years he has plied his musical talents not only to this continent but abroad in many music halls all over the World. Not only is Ronnie a super pianist but a composer and arranger of many trendy tunes from ballads to jazz.

Inspired by the picturesque countryside and vintage wine makers he produced the "*Music of the Vines*". This is an exclusive CD release which is promoted only through the Wine Shops of the World. Ronnie, and his wife Gardner, have continuing musical tours abroad to London on location at the famous *Piazza on the Park*, one of the great European Jazz-Cabaret venues, in the French Wine country such as Bordeau and Beaune, in addition to performing at the "*VinExpo*" -- the biennial International Wine Exposition, and also at The Ritz, in Paris. Oslo, Stockholm, and Copenhagen are no stranger to the "*Here's New Orleans*" Review which is renown throughout Kole's sphere of splendor.

Ronnie Kole

Touring the Far East, he's played the Raffles Hotel in Singapore. He opened the First Annual Wine and Food Expo along with vintners from France, Germany and Italy in addition to being attended by top billing Chefs from all points of the globe.

Never falling short of recognition, King Kole was selected to reign over the "*Krewe of Samaritans*". The selection process is indeed an opting for a Good Samaritan and Ronnie fills the bill. He has also received awards for his many contributions -- the St. Elizabeth Volunteer and Activist Award and an Achievement Award from the Le Petit Theater, the oldest community theater in the country.

Also, a sports promoter, he has been the Treasurer for the Sugar Bowl Commission and will serve as its President in 1998. An avid supporter to all major entertainment affairs such as the annual French Quarter Festival and the annual New Orleans Jazz and Heritage Festival. Enthusiastically, he continues his own mellifluous exhibitions at the Royal Sonesta Hotel on Bourbon Street. Each third Thursday, excepting Summers, at the hotel's *Mystic Den*, frequents an entourage of personal long-time friends and guests who are treated to his special harmonic style of musical pandemonium.

His "*Here's New Orleans*" Revue was first introduced at one of the Biloxi Casinos consisting of a fast paced Roots to Rapture scenario of the birth of Jazz in Storyville to the Papal Mass finale as performed for Pope John Paul II's historic visit to New Orleans. This composition has been highly requested at major convention and concert assemblies.

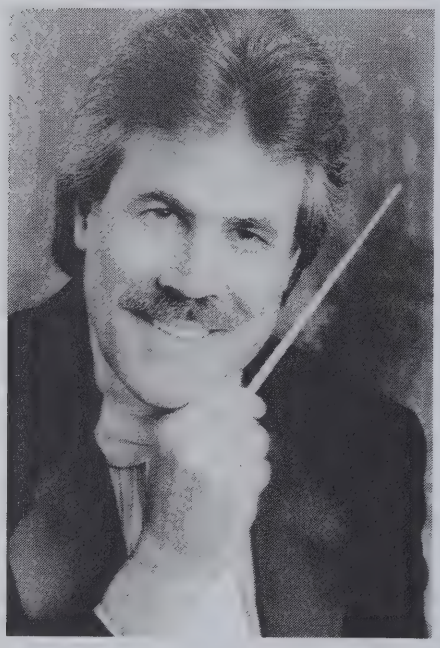
Always innovative, Ronnie cut a new CD called "*Groupe Jazz*" which he calls his foot-tapping attraction. All New Orleans originals are assembled with inclusions of swing, traditional jazz, classic show tunes, country, and polka to boot.

He is always on call, for President and Mrs. Ford's tribute to his opening night bows at the Bolshoi Academy in Vail, Colorado. Always the creative showman, Ronnie conceived the "*BolshaVail*" which melodiously incorporates three short movements in Classic, Viennese and Jazz Waltz. The Vail Valley Foundation has adopted it as their production theme.

As a symphony devotee, he is also on the Board of the Jefferson Performing Arts Society. He and Gardner remain true to their favorite charity, the Easter Seal Society of Louisiana. Each Spring, at their palatial home, the "Chateau Kole" on Bayou Liberty, they host their "*Jazz on the Bayou*" fund-raiser. This annual event is highly regarded as noteworthy and a rewarding experience to all who participate.

"Performing Arts and Artists" --

The Diamondhead Performing Arts Society was supported by Dennis and Nancy while in its infancy. Paul Eckrich stated that Assaf, "kind of took us under his wing!"



Maestro Dennis Assaf

The "*Cultural Premier*" not only for the Greater New Orleans area but including Diamondhead has been the versatile and congenial Dennis Assaf -- Conductor, Musician, Vocalist, Director, Educator, Comedic Entertainer, and Cultural Humanitarian. Under his direction, the Jefferson Performing Arts Society was enriched by Symphonic and Major Choral repertoire presentations. His wife, Nancy Ross Assaf, besides being his partner and associate, is in her own rights an Artist of much acclaim. The twosome have married their talents in special productions and have individually performed in many assemblages for the arts.

Maestro Dennis Assaf, as the founding Director of the Jefferson Performing Arts Society, holds dual responsibilities as its Artistic and Executive Director. Among his many accomplishments, he has been on tours and appearances as a special Guest Conductor performing at acclaimed locations such as the Indiana Opera North in South Bend (Il Trovatore); for the Pensacola Opera (The Gypsy Baron, La Traviata and La Boheme); for the Tampa Bay Opera (Carmen); including five fabulous performances at the Hawaii Opera Theater (La Boheme).

Newspaper accounts have revealed his talents: "Conductor Dennis Assaf delivered unclouded direction effectively . . . he displayed a refreshing no nonsense style . . . he leads the Hawaii Symphony with a keen ear for Puccini's brilliant orchestration." Following his introduction of Verdi's unprecedented Rigoletto, the New Orleans Times Picayune reported that "He kept things moving at a quick but comfortable tempo, lingering nicely when called for but driving through the score with direction and verve." He has also been cited as being the "*Cultural Catalyst*"; recognized as "*One of Ten*

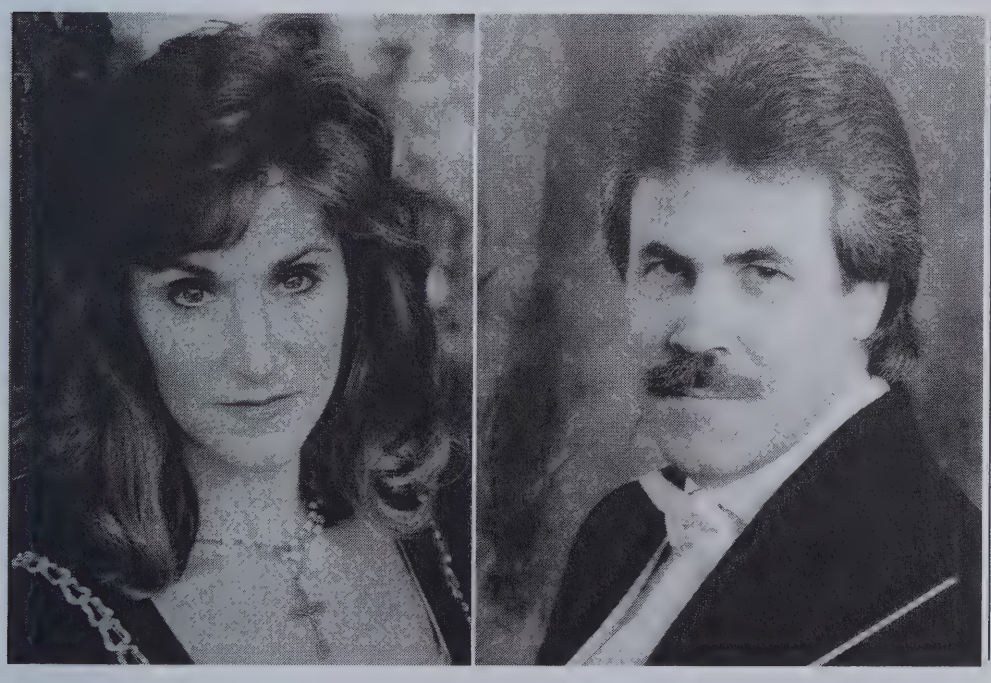
Who've Made a Difference"; and lauded as "*Louisiana's Cultural Leader*".

Assaf's educational pursuits resulted in a Bachelor of Music Degree and a Master of Music in Conducting. He furthered his studies under Harold Farberman at the prestigious Conductor's Institute of the Hart School of Music; with Robert Shaw at Westminster Choir in Princeton; and with Greg Smith Singers at the Conductor's Workshop in New York. His tableau of Awards and Achievements have increased during the years which are much too numerous to tabulate.

As a signal honor, he premiered at Carnegie Hall in 1993 with the New England Symphonic Ensemble in a well received performance of the Mozart C Minor Mass. Under his direction, he assembled, the Jefferson Symphony Orchestra, which accompanied the award winning production of Nutcracker as presented by the superb Ballet Hysell. Symphonic Orchestra appearances have also been reviewed on numerous televised programs and national broadcasting systems.

Always promoting adjuncts to the Jefferson Performing Arts Society, such as the Jefferson Children's Chorus and Youth Chorale, the Jefferson Ballet, Student Arts Adventure Series, Special Arts for Seniors Series, the Stage Without a Theater, his own Comic Symphonic Pops Concert, and the imposing Theater Wing which has produced more than a dozen musicals and operettas such as "West Side Story", "Camelot", "Peter Pan", etcetera . . .

Maestro Assaf's Award sampling:
"Big Easy" Outstanding Achievement, 1994
"One to Watch", 1982 and 1994
"Managing for Excellence", 1992
"Aplauso" Award, 1993



Nancy Ross Assaf Engagements:
Carnegie Hall
New Orleans Opera Association
Jefferson Performing Arts Association
Diamondhead Performing Arts Association
Pensacola Opera
Tampa Bay Opera
Baton Rouge Opera
Jefferson Opera Theater
Tulane Summer Lyric Theater
New Orleans Symphony
Louisiana Philharmonic Orchestra
American Chamber Orchestra of New York
Los Angeles Philharmonic
Denver Symphony Orchestra
Jefferson Symphony Orchestra
Middletown Symphony, Ohio
Cincinnati Ballet
MidAmeria Concerts - Carnegie Hall
1st Monday Contemporary Chamber Ensemble

Maestro Assaf's broad musical talents are not limited to conducting as evidenced by the expansion of his repertoire to include vocal recitals with his beautiful and much talented wife, Soprano Nancy Ross.

Nancy is accomplished in opera, concert, and music theater -- a *Coloratura* captivating an ever-increasing field of admirers while realizing a growing reputation as an impeccable virtuoso and versatile vocalist. Like her distinguished Maestro Husband, she is celebrated throughout the United States. As a native of New Orleans, Nancy Ross Assaf received her degree of Master of Fine Arts in Voice from Tulane University. She has received acclaim as a Southern regional finalist in the Metropolitan Opera National Council auditions and as a finalist in the Center for Contemporary Opera International competitions in New York City.

"Coloratura" Nancy Ross Assaf

Reviews in newspapers throughout the Nation have consistently championed her talents as ". . . an all too heavenly voice . . .", ". . . a lilting soprano voice that is a pleasure to hear . . . ", ". . . enchanting Soprano . . . pure, clear vocals. . . ", ". . . fearless, enterprising soprano soloist. . .", ". . . brought out every ounce of this colorful and intriguing score."

The Angels

Alice Little receives
"Outstanding Citizens Award"

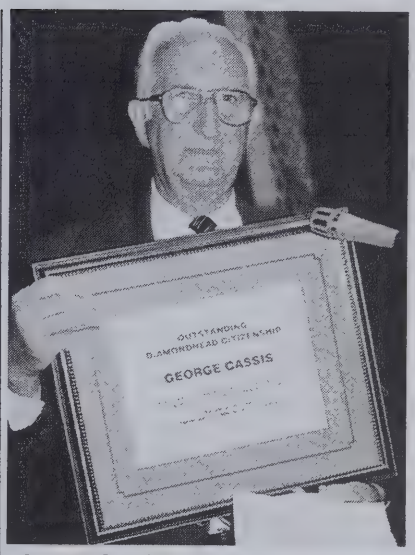
Diamondhead has been blessed with many supportive people, some of whom were of the original pioneers, and some of whom are newcomers. What makes these wonderful supportive people Angels? Sometimes their efforts are not taken into consideration while in other circumstances they are prominently recognized. The "*Annual Outstanding Citizens Award*" is one way in which the Diamondhead Community Association designates those persons whom are personified as being community spirited and giving and caring citizens. There are those who raised monies for the first Yellow School Bus, those who raised monies for the Volunteer Fire Department, those who have raised monies for the Church edifices built and to be built, those who have raised monies for the Diamondhead Academy, and numerous others who have promoted Community and Good Citizen endeavors.

There are those who are quick to volunteer and support their neighbor and the community at the drop-of-a-hat. There are those who are named and those who are unnamed for their respective levels

of giving. There are the activists and the non-activists, both offering in their own way a contribution back to the community as well as to demonstrate participation and involvement in numerous community spirited organizations which have propagated over time and need.

And what a better World-feeling is rendered with the meaningful contributions by those who offer time -- some with financial support -- and some tendering both. People like Alice Little who led the way in Volunteerism and Samaritan support. George Cassis, not at all to be forgotten as a champion and advocate of education and spiritual inspiration. Frances and George Pike for their heeding to the basic requirements of the animals in and around Diamondhead. ---And not to forget their Legions, the Hopkins, the Keens, and the Wise's. Margaret Williamson, an avid Volunteer in RSVP as well as her own individual support program providing transportation to the Diamondhead homebound who have become disabled, or infirmed, or widowed, or aged. ---And, Bertha Morris a long-time resident *Angel of Mercy* to so many folks in need.

Some are business merchants who have proffered community support not only with their own time but with their staff and their facilities. Howard Hamilton, owner of *Diamondhead Supermarket* has responded with even such minuscule measures as supplying grain to feed the ducks at the "Duck pond" during a pond depletion period which lasted six months. When told of persons who were isolated in the community he provided home delivery and has continued to do so for the home-bound.



George Cassis receives "Outstanding Citizens Award"

Howard Hamilton, owner of Diamondhead Supermarket is always supportive. The "Super Cake" was donated and cut at the 25th Diamondhead Silver Anniversary celebration. Measuring 4 by 8 feet, it was deliciously covered with 13 gallons of icing and topped with a red Diamondhead logo.

The Hancock

"History of a Corporate Good Citizen"

On the evening of August 29, 1899, several prominent businessmen of Bay St. Louis, Mississippi, gathered at the Hancock County Courthouse to organize a bank for their fast-growing city. Nineteen subscribers were present, representing a total of 198 shares, -- these shareholders elected a board of directors.

A small frame building located on South Beach Avenue was rented for the sum of seven dollars a month, and on October 9, 1899, it was formally opened as Hancock County Bank. Its opening-day capitalization was $10,000 with deposits of $8,277.41. Following a few aggressive weeks, the Bank Board purchased a site at the corner of Main Street and South Beach intersection to plan for its new building facility. This was pursued with a contract signing on March 1, 1900 engaging John T. McDonald to construct a facility for the sum of $5,100, including a vault. When completed in September of that year it was the first two-story brick building in Bay St. Louis, and was occupied by the bank, the U.S. Post Office, and the U.S. Customs Office.

When the Illinois Central Railroad Systems purchased the Gulf & Ship Island Railroad in 1925, it created a real estate boom along the whole Gulf Coast. Business flourished and the Hancock Bank grew as well. Then came the stock market crash in 1929. Financial institutions failed throughout the United States resulting in Gulfport being without a banking system.

However, Hancock weathered the Depression years resulting in a delegation of Gulfport citizens headed by Mayor Joe Milner, editor Clayton Rand, and Chamber of Commerce president J.C. Rich to appeal to the steadworthy Bank to open in Gulfport.

The new Bank Building was completed for move-in operations by March 1992 with Branch Manager and Assistant Vice President Alecia Gardner taking charge.

The Bank agreed to the move --- on August 15, 1932, its new offices were opened on the corner of Thirteenth Street and Twenty-sixth Avenue. Hancock occupied this facility until moving to Twenty-fifth Avenue and Fourteenth Street in July 1939.

Under the leadership of its five presidents -- Peter Hellwege, Eugene Roberts, Horatio S. Weston, Leo W. Seal, Sr., and Leo W. Seal, Jr. -- Hancock from its beginning has been involved in public projects. It was the first bank along the Mississippi Coast to establish a branch office and was the first to offer drive-in facilities.

Hancock Bank is still expanding and acquiring banking outlets in Louisiana. The Bank is preparing for its 100th Anniversary in 1999.

Hancock's beautiful fifteen-story corporate headquarters at One Hancock Plaza was completed in 1982, with the distinction of being the tallest coastline building between Port Arthur, Texas and Tampa, Florida.

From a little one-room office with a capital of $10,000 -- to a magnificent edifice towering to the sky, Hancock Bank has become the largest bank on the Mississippi Gulf Coast. Preparations are now being made for its First Century Anniversary Celebration on August 29, 1999.

Not only has this Corporate Citizen been active along the whole coastal scene, but its Branch offices, the first in Diamondhead, have had its staff provide a symbol of hospitality and financial services and support to its commercial and residential citizenry.

The Media

Diamondhead residents come from many states, however, not unlike most of the Mississippi coastal communities, a significant portion of its population are from Louisiana; and New Orleans in particular. Orleanians are never alike. Each has there own neighborhood to make tribute to. There is Algiers, or West Bank, the Chalmettians, the 9th-Warders, the Up-Towners, the Lake Fronters, the Metryians, and so on. However, they all vote as one on their tastes for good food and the celebration of Mardi Gras and their opinions about the Saints and the Aints. This is information is digested from the TV channel selections and the newspapers they read. Cable TV offers them two channel selections from most of the national broadcasting stations. With the exception of NBC; affiliates of ABC, CBS, FOX, and even PBS offer local Coast newscasters and advertisers as well as New Orleans newscasters and advertisers.

Diamondhead News is a monthly reporting of the POA and its facilities in addition to club and organization meetings and events.

Most homes in Diamondhead have two newspaper receptacles, one for the *Times Picayune* and the *Sea Coast Echo*; or, the *Times Picayune* and the *Sun Herald*. Monthly, all members receive their copy of "*Diamondhead News*".

Various individuals have volunteered their time and their journalistic talents in reporting the events and happenings of Diamondhead, its people, its clubs, its businesses, its churches and institutions. For the past five years, Margaret Williamson has devoted a major effort in providing *Sea Coast Echo* a featured weekly column known as: ***In and Around Diamondhead.*** As carried in the Thursday edition, Margaret writes about every item of interest in an upbeat and positive manner. She and her husband, John, came from New Orleans via Norco/Destrehan. As Diamondhead old timers, they had bought their lot in 1972 and built their house in '74, primarily as a weekend home for themselves and six children. "Every room had bunks," she declared. When John decided to retire from his grain inspection business, they moved permanently in 1985, to Diamondhead. Neither of the two have a retiring nature; --- Margaret pursues community news and writes her column while John remains active with Coldwell Banker/Coast Delta Realty. Needless to say, both look forward to visits by their twelve grandchildren.

It is not unusual that Diamondhead residents take advantage of the full realm of memberships in its institutions and organizations. Margaret is not typical as indicated by her numerous and diversified memberships which affords a direct line of communication to get to the source of news that projects through her column, *In and Around Diamondhead*. She is a member and supporter of the Garden Club, the Newcomers, RSVP, the Women's Club, the Business and Professional Association, the Program Committee for the Performing Arts Society, the Diamondhead Players, Bay St. Louis Little Theater, the Hancock County Historical Society, AARP, Board member of Diamondhead Community Association, S.P.C.A., the Boaters Association, and the Krewe of Diamondhead.

"On the Green"

Phoenix in Paradise
A Memorial

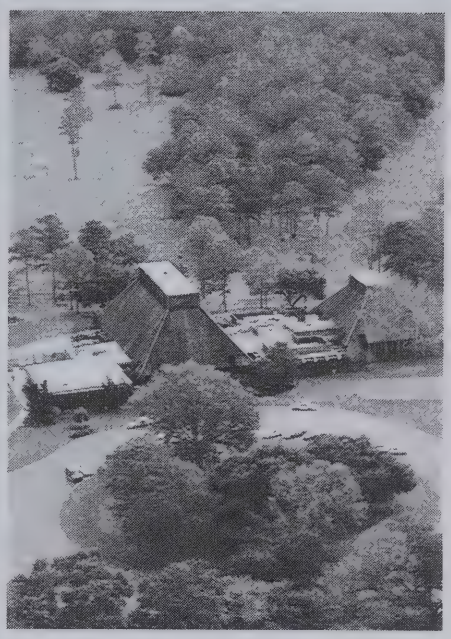
At the time that Diamondhead was in preparation for its celebrations for its twenty-fifth year; and planning tribute to its forthcoming new decades and generations; the community's first landmark called out for its concluding acknowledgement. The Country Club burned down on Sunday, November 12, 1995. A fire alarm was called in at 7 p.m. drawing more than 150 residents to witness the finality of the focus of community social life. More than 100 firemen were called to action to fight the blazes, but to no avail. The wooden structure went fast and was all but finished when the wood-shingled roof took its last heave as a stream of fire and smoke spiraled into the skies. Some of the first on the scene were John and Mary Hays who reminisced the frequent good times they shared in the nearby Club.

The smoldering ashes were still being washed down at 8 a.m. the following morning. A swarm of black crows flocked to the branches of the tall pines overlooking the awesome, scrambled mass of twisted, steel I-beams. Just a few charred wooden rafters were left as they boldly leaned skyward amidst the soot and debris. As if in mourning, the crows ceased their cawing for a respite in offering respect. Quietly and in sorrowful awe, residents who had just learned of the mishap were arriving by cart, car or afoot. Howard Dehnbostel, capturing images through his lens of the last bleak spectacle, remarked that "the loss was heavy, but, I'm glad no one was hurt in the flames." "With the on-coming Snow-birds, at least the 19th hole seems well enough preserved", he continued.

There were about 30 golf carts suspended on the greens as their owners filed past firemen and traced around the yellow barrier tape fencing in the blackened debacle. The Terrace Room was no longer a *Tavern on the Green*. Instead, its table tops were gone while only the metal, center-post legs were standing upward in several rows of miniature columns in defiance of the smoldering heat of the night before.

Still recuperating from surgery, POA President Jim Van Norman arrived in a Pick-up and held an impromptu session with Mary Sinders and George Cassis.

General Manager, Paul Montjoy and Gulf Pro, Phil Hill were adroitly making their observations of the losses and what immediate priorities needed to be placed in order. "I think with any problem, you



The Country Club
1971 to 1995

have to look at the opportunities," stated Montjoy. He looked over to the greens where the Mississippi Seniors' Golf Tournament went on unimpeded as coffee was being served.

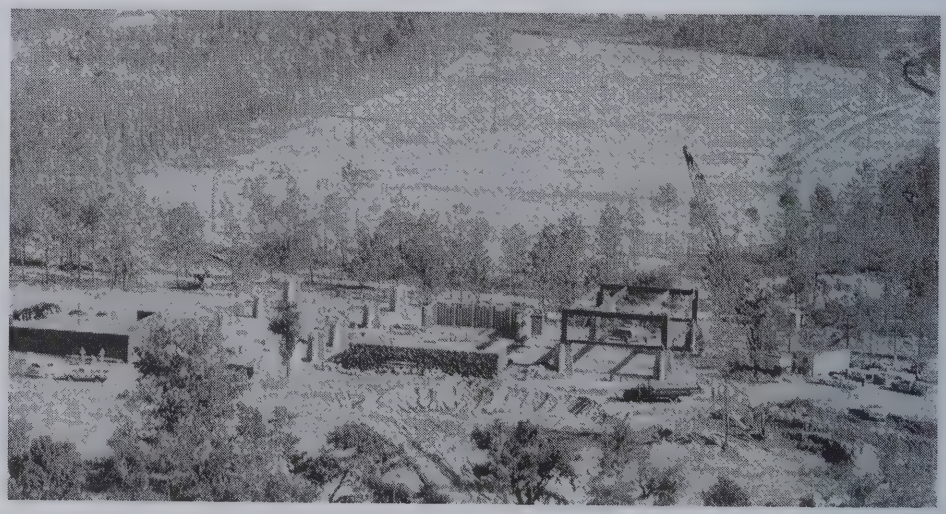
Marge Weber, an entrenched newcomer, remorsefully exclaimed,"I had party reservations for my 50th Wedding Anniversary!" Mary Sinders reassured her, "Don't worry, we'll have another facility for you and for all the others booked for the Romantic Months." Which brought to mind Bonnie and Rayford Jones, who would lament their disruption from dancing to Leon Kelner's band.

At the Community Center, streams of calls were being fielded as many residents walked in to inquire of new meeting places being posted. Anita Abraham, Assistant Manager, was assisting during the scramble to reschedule the numerous events and engagements that were initially booked for the Country Club. Syble Paul, exclaimed, "It breaks my heart to lose our Landmark!" Lou Lamendola, 1995 reigning Queen of Diamondhead, exclaimed that, "Many beautiful dreams have gone up in smoke." All the majestic hanging portraits of past Diamondhead Royalty were destroyed in the fire. Many are irreplaceable. But, in retrospect and good spirit, Lou remarked, "Nevertheless, with a new beginning, the next Community Club will be even bigger and better."

Between the conception
And the creation
Between the emotion
And the response
Falls the shadow . . .

T. S. Eliot, "The Hollow Men"

Paul Montjoy speculated that the next building should be larger to accommodate greater numbers and events because of the growth taking place in Diamondhead. Everyone looks forward with positive feelings yielding to the Phoenix as it rises in youthful freshness from its ashes. But, even so, the Community Club will persevere with observances in shared experiences and shared memories of many wonderful and beautiful past occasions which now are left for only the shadows to remember.



Aerial Photo showing initial excavation and construction of the Diamondhead Country Club showing the Driving Range at top. (1970)

Aloha, Country Club !

Aloha, Country Club, now, but a ghost.
Remembering laughs, and friends caressed,
Holding tall glasses, in loving toast,
Recalling the ones, we once finessed.

Gathering round, the home of dreams,
Where Kings and Queens, adorned the walls.
Then left charred, with twisted beams,
Emptied vestibule, rooms and halls.

Called to action, the Tiki Lounge Bar.
Only one more drink, just one more brew,
The gangs all here, coming near and far,
Great Mardi Gras!, shouts the Tiki Crewe.

Evenings of fun, while havin' a blast,
Friday night specials, - - - Karao-ke.
In the Terrace Lounge, each singer cast,
Much out-of-range, and much out-of-key.

Swinging, swaying, at the Monthly dance.
Reducing stress while calming nerves,
To Leon Kelner's, all couples prance,
Drinking, Laughing, eating hors d'oeuvres.

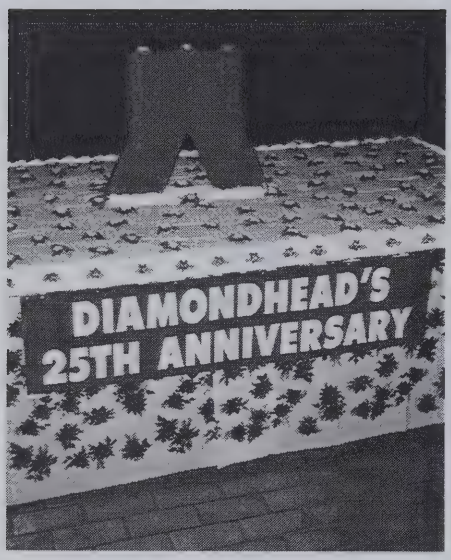
Tuesday nite treats, seafood au Gratin,
And, chops and ham, and corn-on-the-cob,
Salads, soups, marinated chicken,
Family night buffet, Shis-ka-bob.

Ronnie Kole! Nancy! Dennis Assaf!
Bridge Parties; Women! N-few-good-men!
Kid's Theater, looney tunes, all for a laugh,
Tee Times and Tea times, all before ten.

Golfers Pro Shop, Coronation Ball,
But all is still well, with no surprise.
To build anew, a Country Club Hall!
Phoenix of Paradise, - - - Once more to arise!

by dan ellis

Silver Anniversary Fair



Super-Cake donated by Howard Hamilton, owner of Diamondhead Supermarket.

Commemorating Diamondhead's Silver Anniversary, was by the co-sponsorship of the Property Owners's Association and the Business and Professional Association which was held at Diamondhead's Days Inn. Exhibit booths were managed by many merchants in displaying their products and services. The gala event was attended by hundreds of Diamondhead residents who invaded the Poolside walkways in the Atrium while being entertained by local musical talents and offered a wide variety of food samplings from the Chefs of the Diamondhead Country Club, Torgy's, Lagniappe Orleans, Diamondhead Yacht Club, Runway Cafe, and the Diamondhead Supermarket.

They participated the whole evening in winning Merchant offered door prizes, watching fashion shows by L.L. Ltd, Just Judy's, Southern Child and enthralled by the participants in the Wacky Golf Fashion Show contest. Santa Clause pirouetted throughout the maze of people announcing good cheer and handing out candy canes. The fun was topped with the cutting of the hugh Super-cake measuring four feet by eight feet. It was supplied by Diamondhead Supermarket and baked by Gwen Adams and Martha Peters in the store's own Deli department. It was deliciously covered with 13 gallons of icing and topped with a red Diamondhead logo design. The only thing to dim the evening was the loss of the Diamondhead Country Club where the event was scheduled to take place.

Nearby Neighbors

Jourdan River Shores

Jourdan River Shores is a family residential development along the Jourdan River off Highway 603. Most of the residences are raised on pilings by way of flood water restrictions and are laid out along natural and man-made water inlets. It is located between the Kiln and Interstate 10.

Mc Leod Water Park

The Park is located along the banks of the Jourdan River off Highway 603 out of the Kiln. The origins of the park are by donation from the Mc Leod family as a memorial. Albert McLeod operated a turpentine still and general store on the west corner of the Jourdan River off the Highway.

On the banks of the Jourdan River off Highway 603 from The Kiln.

Accommodations at the Park are primarily for camping and picnicking. Besides the main picnic area with 20 tables, there are cooking facilities, and two comfort stations with showers. Nearby is a ballfield with bleachers and a two story pavilion. For campers, there is a camping loop with many parking sites available. There are twin launching ramps and a one mile hiking Nature Trail with foot bridges. A Caretaker is on-premises and area lighting is provided for the evenings.

Stennis Space Center

In the late 1960's, the NASA U.S. Space Program constructed the Stennis Space Center and Testing Facility with all its associated offices in Hancock County. Three hugh test stands were constructed to test the newer generation liquid hydrogen powered engines used in the space shuttle. With the testing of the huge engines it became necessary for NASA to acquire or lease a substantial buffer zone which has a seven mile radius. This was needed to protect homes and residents from noise and vibrations involved during the testing process. In order to provide the buffer zone, the government acquired this vast area constituting almost 1/3 of the entire size of the County [485 sq. miles]. No habitable or overnight occupancy is permitted. The eastern perimeter extends almost to Highway 603 just west of the Stennis Airport and south to Highway 43. Many other government facilities share the area.

Visit the Stennis Space Center Visitor's Center for Fun and Learning.

Open to the public is the Stennis Space Center Visitors Center which offers fun, excitement and learning for the whole family at no charge. It is open seven days a week, from 9 a.m. until 5 p.m., except some Holidays. Visitors can trace the history of NASA and space flight and see many exhibits representing other agencies located at Stennis which includes the U.S. Navy's world-class oceanographic community. NASA's direct economic impact upon the Mississippi and Louisiana area totals $374 million and effects the employment of approximately 13,124 jobs. It was estimated by Dr. Charles A. Campbell of the Mississippi State University that as of early 1995 the Stennis Space Center had a tax revenue impact of $30 million on local government and $197 million on local area retail sales.

The Space Center provides Films, lectures and demonstrations which are made available by tour guides. A massive 154-foot Space Shuttle external fuel tank and various rocket models are on display. Visitors who are extending their day can even purchase lunch at the Space Tower Grill. Several educational programs are offered to young children. One program is EEM or Early Education Monday specifically designed to motivate children ages 3 through 6 years in developing interests through interaction with scientific and mathematical concepts in addition to basic skills. Another program is LEAP or Lower Elementary Aerospace Education Program designed to introduce concepts in Living and Working in Space. A Teacher Resource Center provides support materials to elementary level classroom teachers. SpaceFEST is another program designed for Families Exploring Space Together. Reservations can be made at the Stennis Space Center by calling (601) 688-2370.

De Lisle - Dupont Area

By way of the back road, Kapalama Drive exits to the Kiln-DeLisle Road. By going south of the Interstate which is Exit 20 there is a sign marker for D.E.R.A. which is the Dupont Employees Recreation Area. The 80 acre site was once the magnificent Pine Hills Resort Hotel which also included a well groomed gulf course. E. I. Dupont de Nemours & Co. acquired the hotel and demolished it for safety reasons in 1983. Dupont had dedicated its De Lisle plant in December 1979. The primary chemical production is titanium dioxide. The plant employs more than 600 personnel and housed on 200 acres of a 2280 acre spread at the northeast corner of Bay St. Louis. Part of its buffer zone extends to the historic little fishing village of De Lisle, famous for its large stand of Live Oaks and still very much alive with stories of pirate treasures.

The Dupont Plant operates from its Bay St. Louis perch site at DeLisle.

Coastal Neighbors

Waveland

Land of the Waves consists of about 6000 population. It was originally established as a summer retreat and resort for visitors from New Orleans and Natchez. Nicknamed the *Hospitality City*, it was

incorporated March 6, 1888. It is the birthplace of the coast's first all-women Mardi Gras Krewe and stages the coast's oldest St. Patrick's Day Parade. Along Beach Drive is Buccaneer State Park sporting camping, picnicking, swimming, fishing and the Wave Pool and Water Slide. Access to Waveland is by way of Exit 13 from I-10 along Highway 603 which is approximately a 15 minute drive from Diamondhead.

Waveland boasts the oldest St Patrick's Parade on the Coast.

Bay Saint Louis

Originally known as Shieldsborough, Bay St. Louis is now the County Seat for Hancock County. Like Waveland, Clermont Harbor, and Lakeshore to the West, Bay St. Louis was popular to Orleanians as a weekend vacationland. However, Bay St. Louis, having an earlier heritage than the other communities, had its origins as a melting pot comprised of French, Indian, Spanish, and other cultures. Its Main Street makes claim to having the South's largest group of architecturally intact nineteenth century structures where residents and visitors can shop for art, crafts and antiques. Its citizens, supportive of gaming activities, have benefitted by the increased revenues derived from Casino Magic. The City as well as the County have undergone several changes to the infrastructure.

Bay St. Louis has rejuvenated its *Old Town* into a small mecca of shops and entertainment.

Pass Christian

The *Pass* has its very own unique qualities. It is for this reason that so many have journeyed from near and far to fulfill their quest. Pass Christian is a peninsula. To the South, is the Gulf of Mexico enclosing the Mississippi Sound with the barrier islands and the channels or passes named Christian and Marianne. These passes flow alongside the second largest oyster reef in the world which invites fishermen and sportsmen to tong oysters or clams in the shallows. In front of the main part of town is a protected Marina consisting of a small craft harbor for some 300 pleasure boats and 100 commercial fishing vessels.

U.S. Highway 90 is paralleled by a six mile ribbon of sand beaches bordering the Gulf and a five mile secluded span of roadway known as Scenic Drive. Along this Oak tree lined Drive are the many, beautiful antebellum mansions and cottages which are rich in Historical significance.

Pass Christian's Mariner's Harbor is the most engrossing along the Coast in addition to its five mile Historic District of Antebellum Homes.

The suburban wooded expanse is composed of such residential neighborhoods as Henderson Point, Pass Christian Isles, and Timber Ridge which encloses the Pass Christian Isles Golf Club.

Hawaiian Streets

Hawaiian Royalty

1795-1819, Kamehameha I, The Warrior King
1819-1824, Kamehameha II, Iolani Liholiho, I's son
1824-1854, Kamehameha III, Kauikea Ouli, I's youngest son
1854-1863, Kamehameha IV, Alexander Liholiho, Grandson
1863-1872, Kamehameha V, Prince Lot, Another grandson
1873-1874, King William Lunalilo, "People's King" by popular vote
1874-1891, King David, Kalakaua, "Merry
1891-1893, Queen Lili Uokalani, sister of Kalakaua

The Hawaiian Islands were discovered by Captain Cook in 1778. He encountered a gay, generous, fun loving people. Even now, visitors to the South Pacific are enchanted by its special charm and hospitality.

The tropical islands have an allure which magnetizes the yearning wanderlust of the young as well as the old. Who hasn't had the desire to visit Hawaii and other parts of the South West Pacific. Who hasn't enjoyed attending a luau. Who hasn't enjoyed the drum beats and pulsations of a hula dance. Who hasn't enjoyed the variety of exotic drinks served in ornate glassware shaped in coconuts, bamboo, Tiki gods and goddesses amply garnished with flowers, fruits and frills. Who hasn't enjoyed the many movies and television shows regarding the South Pacific.

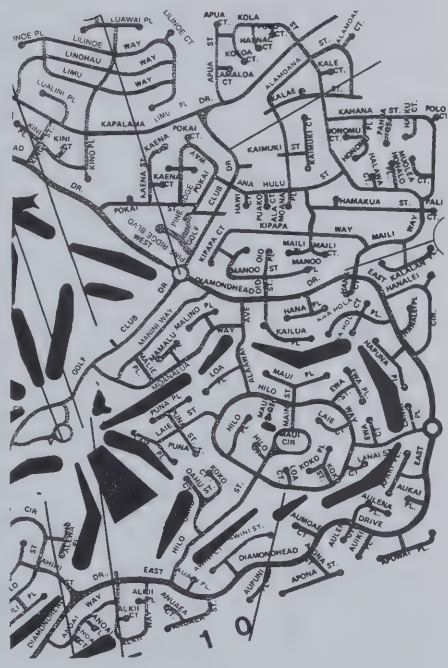
A Tribe of Tahitians invaded Diamondhead and demonstrated their ancient sword dance and how to really do the Hula.

A warm spirit of friendliness, cooperative spirit, laughter, music and dance, is ever present at Diamondhead. Every day of every year this spirit and ambiance continues to enchant its visitors and residents alike. Even the name of Diamondhead lends to its distinct uniqueness.

How more natural was it for the engineers and architects to proceed with including motifs and logos of Hawaiian charm and elegance. Upon asking Holcomb Hector, Vice President of the Purcell Corporation about the street names, he mentioned that the first engineering group had named the original ninety miles of streets. This prompted inquiry as to a Street Name Directory and Translation. To this, Mr. Hector chuckled, "No, but it has been a problem to some folks, both in pronouncing and in finding streets." [1] He further offered that even he had to inquire in what section of Diamondhead was a specific street in order to find it. But it renders the community a singular character that no other in the continental United States has. In seeking the street naming source from Paul Montjoy, he explained that he was part of the original name selection program. He stated that it was understood from the beginning that the decision to use Polynesian names would be difficult for visitors and residents alike, including the service groups. Therefore, a strategy was developed that was based on using a grid system in conjunction with the street addresses. Mr. Montjoy demonstrated the method, afterwhich through several examinations proved to be quite easy. Of course, the approach is rendered impossible without a grid map overlay which was once published in the original Telephone Directory which was prepared by Diamondhead Corporation. [2] Example: A person living at 950 Pono is resident in Grid number 95. Therefore, by simply knowing the first two address numbers, such as in 9-5-0, using the 95 results in Grid number 95 on the map overlay. This is true for most of the residences, however, in some cases there are streets that course through more than one grid square. Hilo Way makes a circuit through four grids, 68, 78, 79, and 69; while Hilo Place and Hilo Court are both in Section 68.

(Author's Note) Providing a translation of street names was not easily done. Reviewing several dictionary selections, it was decided upon a standard Hawaiian Dictionary. This provided the ensuing street conversions. After a slow and painstaking look-up process, it became evident that all street names were not to be found and that the original source was more than likely some Polynesian language version other than Hawaiian and may well have been some conversational handbook or perhaps some Malayan or Tahitian cookbook. (Including Streets, Courts, Ways, Drives, Lanes, etc., there are actually more than 300 roadways in Diamondhead.)

Diamondhead Wahines demonstrating their tribal houligans. Les Stafford, Chris Arnos, Strabo Clayett, and R.B. Boatright. (1988)



[1] "Interview with Holcomb Hector, VP, Purcell Company, Inc., March 3, 1995"

[2] "Telephone Directory, Diamondhead Corporation, 1978"

The following translations were derived by research through Pukui and Elbert's "Hawaiian Dictionary" [3] and Hune's "Say it as it is!" [4] Unfortunately, there were some Street names that were not found, but the pursuit goes on.

Ahekolo	gentle breeze
Ahi	fire, match, lightning, or tuna fish
Ahiahi	evening, late afternoon
Ahihi	low spreading bush, creeping vine
Ahia	tinder, ignitable powder
Ahoni	patience
Ahuawa	a sedge tree with long narrow leaves
Ahui	a bunch, as in bananas or grapes
Ahuli	white hot
Aika	poor tasting fish
Akaka	laughter, merriment
Akamu	Adam
Akoko	endemic shrubs and trees
Alapai	slander, falsehood
Alawai	channel, canal
Alewa	bouyant, floating
Alii	chief, ruler, monarch, king
Aloha	love, affection, welcome, hello, goodbye
Alu	cooperate, act together, or gutter, ravine
Ana hola	hourglass
Ana hulu	ten day period
Analii	native fern with narrow fronds
Anela	angel, guardian angel
Anoai	greetings, news
Anuaea	soft, sweet, frangrance
Aolina	gummy or sticky day
Apelehama	volcanic lava
Apona	embrace
Apua	fish trap
Apuwai	a variety of taro used to make poi
Auahi	smoke
Aukai	sailor, travel by sea
Aulena	banana
Aumoae	to care for
Aupuni	government, kingdom, nation
Awini	sharp, bold
Ena	angry, red hot
Enoa	wild, untamed
Ewa	crooked, out of shape
Haena	wildness, red hot, burning
Haiku	name of town, a flower
Halawa	curve, to go from sed to side
Hale	house, building
Hale iwa	ninth house, or pretty house
Hana	work, activity
Hanalie	name of large valley on Kaua'i Island
Hanauma	rare
Hapuna	spring, pool, puddle
Hau	a lowland tree, chattering teeth
Haleiwa	ninth house, or pretty house
Hilo	twist, braid, or first night of new moon
Hoala	to waken, to rise up
Iki	small, little
Iolani	name of palace in Honolulu
Iona	him, her, his ,hers
Kaena	to boast, to brag, glorify, praise
Kahala	amberjack, or yellow tail
Kahana	cutting, drawing a line, turning point
Kaiki	tide, beginning to flow
Kailua	deep sea
Kaimu	initiation, boys into the men's house
Kaikimo	dealing with the tide
Kakoo	sash, belt, girdle
Kalae	clear, calm, unclouded
Kalaepohuku	swelling, swollen
Kalalau	variety of taro
Kalani	a fish, kala fish
Kale	watery or thin poi

[3] "Mary Kawena Pukui and Samuel H. Elbert, Hawaiian Dictionary."
[4] "Mene Hune, Say it as it is! "

Kaleki	Thursday
Kalo	taro, its roots make poi
Kaluapalena	bake in the ground
Kamehameha	Goddess, Reign of Kings of Hawaii
Kanoa	bowl, hollow of land
Kapalama	edge of light, dawn, dusk
Keke	big bellied, a type of fish
Kepa	notched, to catch bonito tuna
Kepuhi	prepare a fire
Kiko	dotted, speckled
Kimo	a game like jacks, to pound, to mash
Kina	China
Kini	many
Kino	body, person
Kipapa	pavement, level terrace
Kipuna	restrain, to hold back
Koko	blood
Kola	hard, rigid, sexually excited, over-sexed
Kolo	to creep, crawl, or a gentle breeze
Koloa	Hawaiian duck
Kome	papyrus, or sweet potato
Kona	leeward side
Kono	to invite, induce, or to attract birds
Koula	old name of Honolulu harbor
Kui	to string, as flowers for a lei or fish
Kunia	love in the heart
Laa la	sacred or holy sun
Lae	forehead, brow, point, promontory
Laie	winbwards of O'ahu or vineleaf
Lamoloa	long daylight
Lanai	a porch, balcony, veranda, Lanai Island
Leke	come
Lilinoe	fine mist, or rain
Limu	underwater plants, or algae, or moss
Linohau	beautifully decorated, ornamental
Loa	long, tall, distant
Lola	drooping, hanging, downward, lazy
Lono	news, report, remembrance, rumor
Loulu	native fan palms, bleached plaited hats
Luakini	temple, church, cathedral
Lualini	[lualii] outhouse, toilet
Luana	enjoy pleasant surroundings, relax
Luawai	well, cistern, pool artesian well
Lumahai	medicine, fingers making string figures
Mahalo hui	thanks, gratitude, thank you
Maili	pebble used as sinker to fish for squid
Makiki	cockfight, stone used to fish for octopus
Maleka	America
Malie	calm, quiet, serene, still
Malino	calm, quiet, pacific, smooth
Mamalu	protection overhang for shade, umbrella
Manini	reef surgion fish, or variety of taro
Manoo	sunburn
Mapunapuna	your love stirs within me
Maui	name of one Hawaiian Island
Mauna loa	long mountain, largest active volcano
Moana lua	bottom of lake or crater
Maunalani	mountain or stone
Mele	sing, chant, poem
Moanalua	ocean, open sea, or a camp
Mohonua	[moho] representative, champion
Muolea	to talk incessantly
Nele	needy, wanting, poor
Oahu	principal Hawaiian Island, gathering place
Oio	ghosts departing from Chief and tribe
Oliwa	olive tree, tree rarely bearing fruit
Olu	cool, refreshing, pleasant
Owene	mesh size or small sized taro
Paani	play, sport, game, joke, ball game
Pahoa	short dagger, stone weapon, stick
Pali	cliff, steep hill
Pane	answer, reply, response
Peka	to tattle, tell tales
Pokai	to go along, as wind blown smoke
Poki	small, dainty, fine, close stiching
Polina	shiny black
Polo	large, plump, fat one who does not work
Pomo	apple
Poni	to annoint, to crown
Pono	rightful, lawful, goodness
Puako	stem or tassel of sugarcane to make hats
Puma	small opening, door
Puna	a spring, or a large spoon

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&
PROPERTY OWNERS ASSOCIATION, INC.

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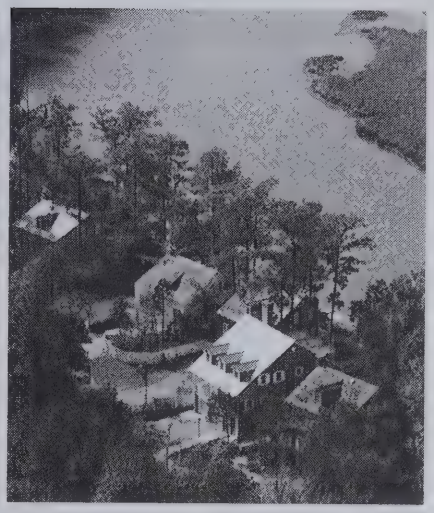

Rotten Bayou

Village Livin'

Snowed

Rained

FACTS ABOUT MISSISSIPPI

State Flower and Tree. In 1900, the school children of Mississippi selected the Magnolia as the State flower. In 1952 the Legislature selected the Magnolia as the official State Tree.

State Song. Go Mississippi was adopted as the official State Song in 1964 by the State Legislature. Both the words and the music were written by Houston Davis.

State Bird. Found in all sections of Mississippi, the Mockingbird was selected as the State Bird by the Women's Federated Clubs, and by the State Legislature in 1944.

State Motto. *Virtute et Armis* meaning Valour and Arms.

State Capital. Jackson, Mississippi

State Nickname. The Magnolia State.

State Flag. Stars and Bars with Magnolia

State Admission to the United States was on December 1, 1817 as the 20th State. A new American Flag was designed having 20 stars.

Memorial Day. Columbus, Mississippi was the origination City to promote the Federal Holiday for Veterans. The ladies of that community had initiated placing flowers on the graves of the victims following the *War Between the States*. Flowers were placed on both Confederate and Federal gravesites.

On Gambling, Mississippi is the second largest gambling state in the United States.

Mississippi was the first Independent Republic and was the first State to wave the banner of a One Star Flag, (The Bonny Blue Flag).

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The Historic Diamondhead Community Church Collection

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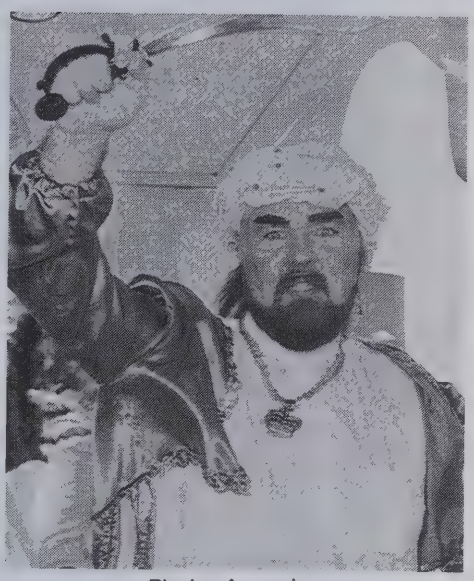
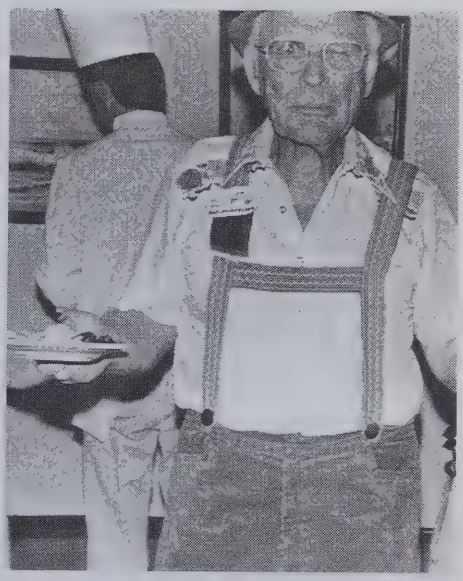


Playing Around



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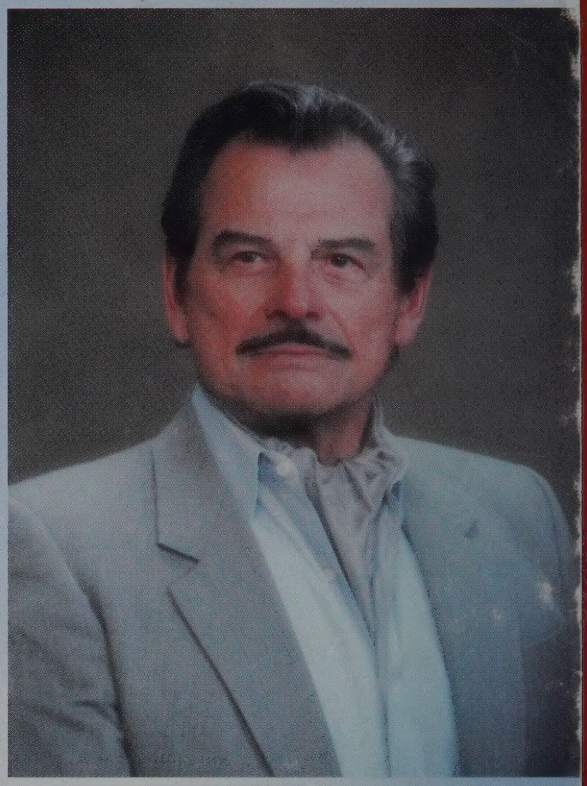

DAN ELLIS

Former Educator and business owner, Dan Ellis holds a Bachelor of Science degree from the University of Southeastern Louisiana and a Master's degree in Education from Loyola University. Additional Graduate work was achieved in Sociology and Psychology from Tulane University and Louisiana State University.

In addition, he is noted for many articles on Computer Technology in New Orleans newspapers and in Computer journals. Upon taking permanent residence on the Gulf Coast he authors articles on folklore and historic events. He is writing the History of Pass Christian, "*Pass in Revue*" and has completed "*Diamondhead Jubilee*", a silver anniversary commemorative history of Diamondhead, Mississippi. He has published *A Panorama of History and Culture - Mississippi Gulf Coast.* He is a contributing Author to several books and magazines and is the Editor for the *AARP Mississippi Newsletter.*

Ellis is active with the Coast Chamber of Commerce as a member of the Board, and serves on several committees. He was signaled out by the "Coast Business" for its Who's Who for 1995.

His style of writing is light and easy while his research is pursued with in-depth scrutiny for authenticity in Historical Correctness.

CCI CHRIS CONSULTANTS / SHER DYE & ASSOCIATES
Architects / Interior Designers

DIAMONDHEAD COUNTRY CLUB
Schematic View of Clubhouse

Proposed as of June 1996